SouthCambs

MAGAZINE • AUTUMN 2011

INSIDE // ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH // COMMUNITY // CONSERVATION // OLYMPICS // ART & CULTURE // KEY ISSUES - TENANTS' NEWS

Customer Service Excellence

See page 20

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE
The Government Standard

South Cambridgeshire District Council

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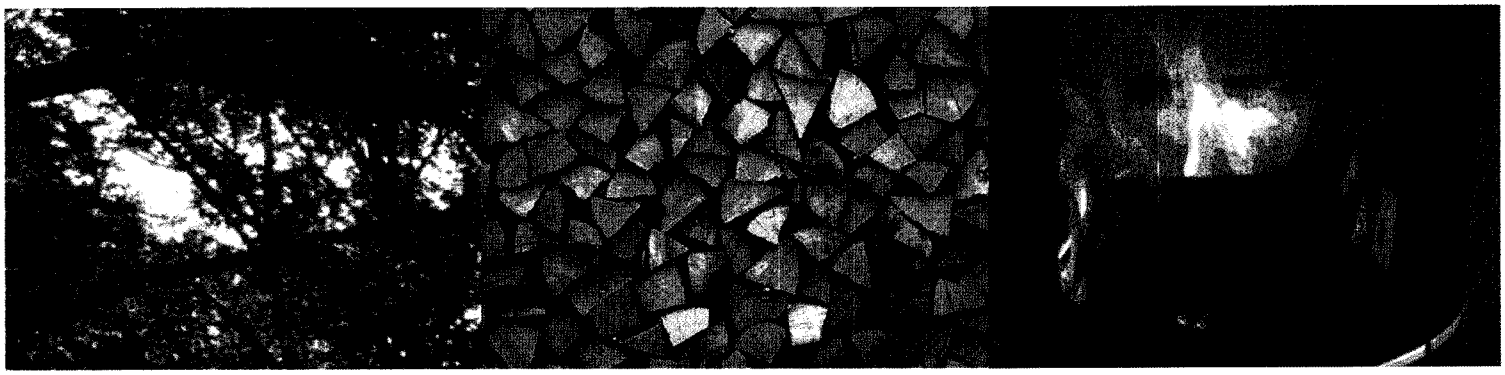

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Welcome to the Autumn issue of *South Cambs magazine.*

We're taking a closer look at customer service in this issue – something that directly affects all our residents and is at the heart of SCDC. Find out about our recent accreditation for Customer Service Excellence in the special feature on pages 20-21.

We've had some fantastic results recently about our blue bin scheme – you can find out more on pages 26-27. Credit must go to all of our residents who help to make the scheme such a success.

Cllr Ray Manning, Leader,
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Follow us on:

search 'South Cambridgeshire'
www.twitter.com/southcambs

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● **Front cover image: Customer Service Excellence (page 20)**

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South Cambs Magazine

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Letters to the editor and delivery queries should be directed to:

Editor: Eleanor Pasfield

South Cambridgeshire District Council
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George Pearson: 01223 499464
GeorgePearson@bright-publishing.com

Maria Francis: 01223 499457
MariaFrancis@bright-publishing.com

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Putting service first

If you phone us we will

- answer your call promptly – usually within 20 seconds
- provide voicemail if the person you need is unavailable
- answer your phone message within one working day

If you write to us we will

- reply to your letter or email within 10 working days
- if we cannot deal in full with your enquiry, we will give you the name of the officer dealing with it and a date when they will get back to you

If we write to you we will

- write in plain language
- arrange for translation, large type, Braille or audio tapes upon request

At all times we will

- treat you with respect, be polite, patient and honest

If we visit you we will

- carry identification that you can check with a phone call to our Contact Centre on 03450 450500
- arrive at the time we say, or give you as much notice as possible if we have to change the time
- treat your home with respect

If we get it wrong we will

- apologise if we have made a mistake or failed to meet our standards
- acknowledge your written complaint within three working days
- reply in full to your complaint within 10 working days

Particular services have their own additional standards. These are available at www.scambs.gov.uk/customerstandards or copies can be sent by post – please call 03450 450 500

How to contact us

Main office
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne,
Cambridge CB23 6EA
Office open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm
f: (01954) 713149
e: scdc@scambs.gov.uk
www.scambs.gov.uk
minicom: (01480) 376743

Telephone

03450 450 500	general enquiries
03450 450 051	housing general enquiries
03450 450 061	housing and council tax benefits
03450 450 062	building regulation inspections
03450 450 063	environmental services
03450 450 063	licensing
03450 450 064	council tax and business rates
03450 455 214	electoral services
03450 455 215	development control
03450 455 216	development services

Scan this Quick Response code with your smart phone to go straight to our website

Need to make a payment?
There are several ways in which you can make a payment to SCDC. We encourage payments by direct debit or by credit or debit card. The card service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- By phone: 03450 455 218
- Or online: www.scambs.gov.uk/paymybill

You can also pay using a payment card at any Post Office or any Pay Point outlet.

To request a direct debit form or a payment card call 03450 450 064

Payments can also be made in person at Cambridge City Council's Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm, excluding bank holidays.

Our Vision:
- We will make South Cambridgeshire a safe and healthy place where residents are proud to live and where there will be opportunities for employment, enterprise and world-leading innovation.
- We will be a listening council, providing a voice for rural life and first-class services accessible to all.

Tell us how we're doing
At SCDC we're proud of what we are trying to achieve and recognise we can always do better. To further improve our services, we would appreciate your feedback, either by telling us when we have performed particularly well, or informing us when you have not been satisfied. You can do this in a number of ways:

- Comments at scdc@scambs.gov.uk
- Compliments at compliments@scambs.gov.uk
- Complaints at complaints@scambs.gov.uk for our online form and leaflet
- In person at our offices Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5pm
- By telephone on 03450 450 500 Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm and on Saturday 9am - 1pm
- In writing to the Customer Service Coordinator at our main office

If you would like a copy in large print please contact:

03450 450 500
email: SCmag@scambs.gov.uk

This magazine is printed on paper which is:
Wood fibre from sustainable forests
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ECF Elemental Chlorine free
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Rampton Drift project launch Day

Regular readers will know that we have been working on the Rampton Drift demonstrator project since 2010. We've put together designs and plans to fit new equipment and technologies into older houses to increase efficiency and then monitor how much energy is used over two years.

Because there are so many unknowns in this project it was decided that the work would be carried out in phases. Phase 1 – four homes, phase 2 – another five homes and phase 3 – the final four homes.

In June we began on phase 1 by holding a launch event – the occasion was marked by local residents and councillors.

The project has generated a huge amount of interest across the country because it will give us important data to show the impact on energy use of a range of technologies and equipment. It will show how much energy is saved over two years and how close existing homes can get to new properties in terms of energy efficiency.

The government, other local authorities, landlords and private residents will want to use what we learn here especially as many existing homes that need retrofitting were built during the same period, or are older (1950s – 1970s). This whole project is a learning curve for us. We're working together with our invaluable volunteers (the home owners), Willmott Dixon, PRP Architects and ACCE Solutions to help make this a huge success.

To find out more information, contact Tracy Mann, 01954 713342, tracy.mann@scambs.gov.uk

Swavesey Village College Design Days

Our popular annual Design Days took a slightly different turn this year. We decided to use the Rampton Drift project for students to base their designs on.

As usual the students were divided into teams. This year all the team managers were taken on a site tour of Rampton Drift to look at the houses in the project, as well as visit the Willmott Dixon site office to learn more about the different types of equipment and technologies that are going to be used to make the houses more energy efficient.

Meanwhile back at Swavesey Village College, PRP Architects and some of our officers worked with the remaining students to explain all the different aspects of the Rampton Drift project, which included how to insulate homes really well, how to help generate energy by using things like solar panels, how to heat properties and the overall social impact of living in energy efficient homes and thinking differently about how we live (making sure we recycle, reuse, repair).

This year we also included a food calendar and students created dishes made from fresh seasonable food that could be grown in gardens or allotments. As ever the three-day project led to some exciting and innovative designs from the students, which made deciding on the eventual winner difficult; if the future holds anywhere near as much promise as all the designs from students taking part, then it's going to be very bright indeed.

• **ABOVE Swavesey Village College students take part in the competition**

The winning team, 'Orwell Bandits' won a flight over the Northstowe site courtesy of The Rural Flying Corps based in Bourne. To find out more contact tracy.mann@scambs.gov.uk

Helping the voluntary and community sector

In April, we gave out grants to help 38 wide ranging organisations.

The four Citizens Advice Bureaux serving South Cambridgeshire were all funded to continue giving out valuable advice on areas such as housing, benefits and employment.

The Royston and District Volunteer Centre was also helped to continue to support people into volunteering opportunities, which can often help people back into work.

Local community and family mediation services, Relate Cambridge and projects to support both younger and older people have also been helped along with Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service and Cambridgeshire ACRE.

It's hoped by continuing to provide valuable grants, we can support a thriving voluntary and community sector in South Cambridgeshire and one that meets the needs of our residents.

With this in mind, we're carrying out a review of all our grant schemes, including not just those in this article – but others such as conservation, community facility (as featured in the summer issue of the magazine) and housing grants.

We want to make sure that how we provide grants is linked to council priorities. We also want it to be as simple as possible for individuals, groups and organisations to apply. We'll be carrying out a consultation with the voluntary and community sector, parish councils and others later this autumn so that we can make any improvements and changes in good time for 2012/13.

If you would like further information contact the Partnerships Officer on 01954 713290 or keep an eye on our website www.scambs.gov.uk

Reach a wider audience with Cambridgeshire.net

Do you have a local event or course that you want to advertise?

If you want to reach a wider audience, then why not visit the Cambridgeshire.net website and register for free. You can also access it from the homepage of our website www.scambs.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire.Net is maintained by Cambridgeshire County Council and lists details of local organisations, courses, services and facilities in Cambridgeshire.

Over 30,000 people currently visit the website every month and it aims to provide residents and communities in Cambridgeshire with easy online access to local information.

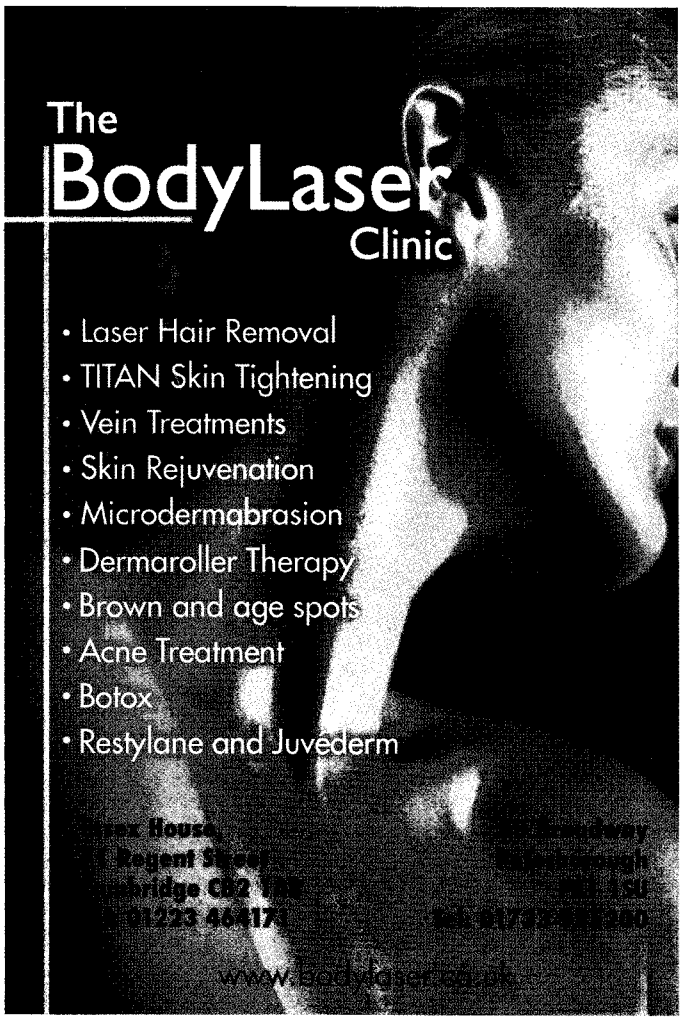
Once registered, you will be able to add details of your organisation and its events, courses and activities for free.

At the moment the site lists around 4000 local groups, clubs and organisations, 3000 courses and 2500 local events and activities.

If you don't have Internet access, then contact Jean Twine at Cambridgeshire County Council using the details below, who will send you a form to complete so you can still register.

You'll be contacted each year to confirm that your details are still correct but the Cambridgeshire.Net team would be grateful if you could inform them of any important changes.

If you have any concerns or queries about the website, please contact Jean Twine, Cambridgeshire. Net Database Administrator,



Halloween Ghost Tours
Come with us to explore the darker side of Cambridge this Halloween. Punting & walking ghost tours run from 21st to 31st October 2011, departing at regular intervals from Scudamore's Mill Lane punt station. Tours last 90 minutes.
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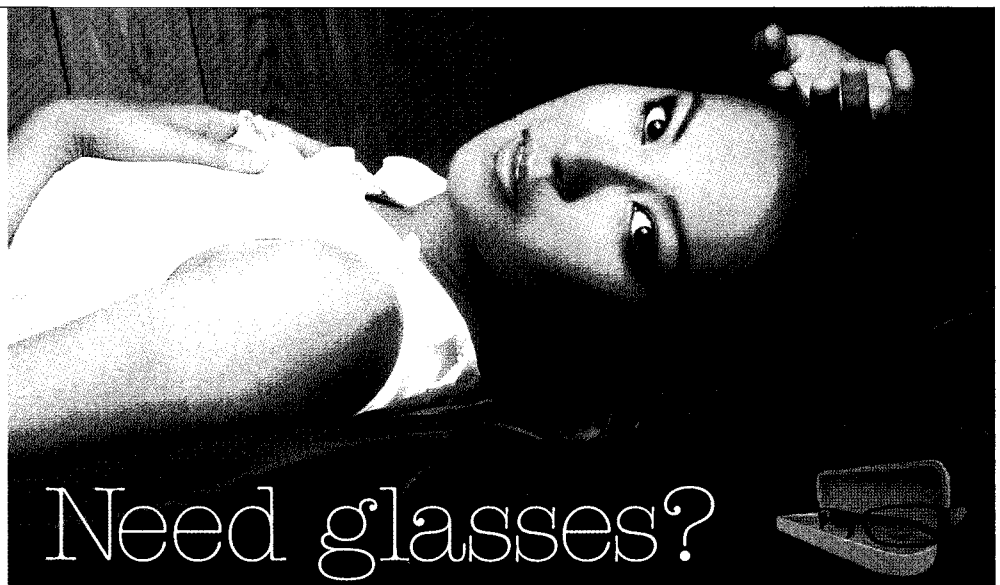
†NHS Optical Voucher must be properly completed and signed by your optician.



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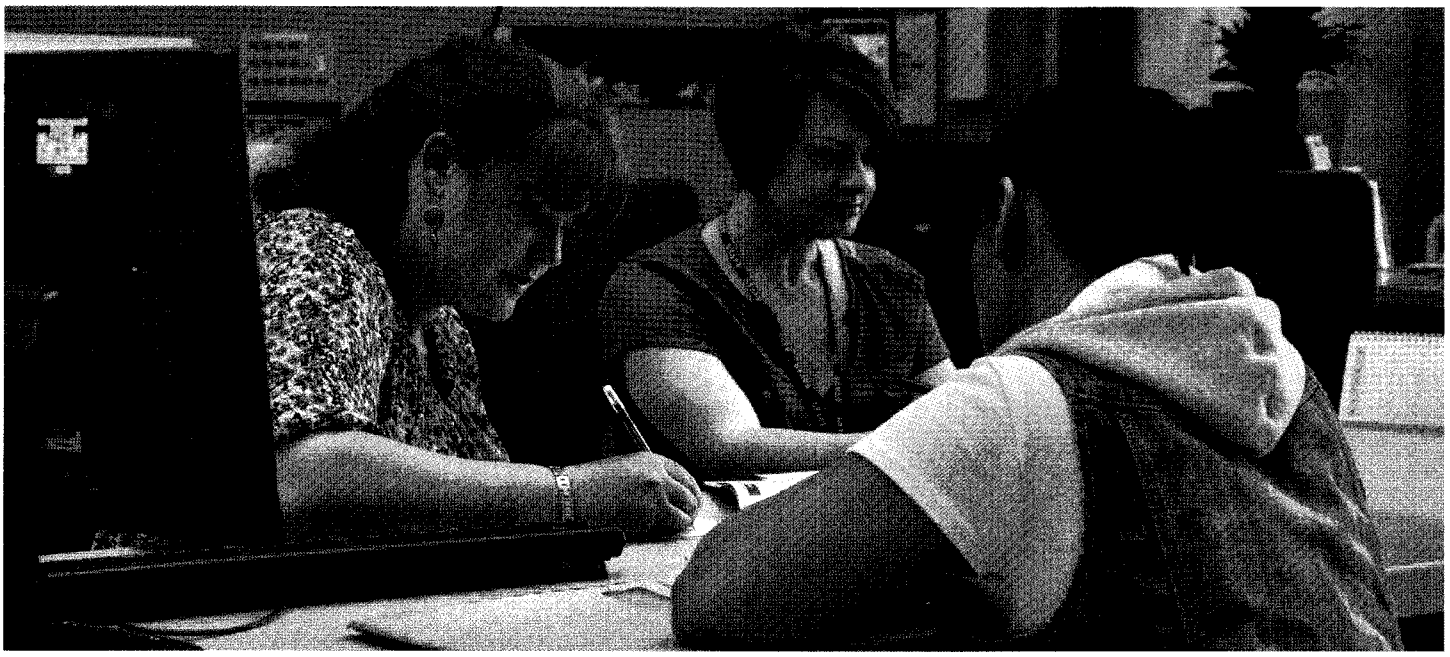


Our Scrutiny and Overview Committee has recently finished two reviews to improve customer service for our residents.

The first looked at our customer contact services where Scrutiny recommended that we should bring the contact centre back in-house. This would give residents increased and improved options to contact us for example by email and text. It will also lead to saving the council over £200,000.

Our planning services were also reviewed. Recommendations for improvement focussed on the need for better communication, training for staff and councillors, and taking a more flexible approach to applications relating to historic buildings to help all our customers.

The committee's chairman, Cllr James Hockney said, "I'm delighted at the results of these two reviews. The contact services review will lead to real improvements in the way that residents can contact SCDC and also save significant sums of money. The planning service review came about due to feedback on the need for improved customer service, and results are already being seen.

"We're now looking at our sheltered housing service and the review team includes four residents who will help us to see the service through their eyes."

If you have any suggestions about what the Scrutiny Committee should look at next, please email scrutiny@scambs.gov.uk **or ring Jackie Sayers, Scrutiny Officer on** 01954 713451.

Beware of hoax calls

We'd like to remind residents to be vigilant following more reports of bogus callers, claiming to be council employees, offering a council tax refund - in a bid to steal bank details.

In the past few weeks, several people have reported the phone calls to us, and there are fears that many more have received the scam calls. The incidents are occuring throughout East Anglia and have been highlighted on local TV.

The scam involves hoax calls to residents homes asking for personal details such as date of birth and bank details. The bogus callers ask for debit card or bank account details so they can refund overpayments of council tax into the residents' account.

The calls are not being made by our council tax team. We would like to remind residents not to give their personal information or bank details to anyone over the phone.

Anyone who wishes to check their council tax account details can call 03450 450 064 **or email** revenues@scambs.gov.uk **If you have already handed over these details because of this scam contact Cambridgeshire police by telephone on** 0345 456 4564

Are you registered?

Between August and November each year, every authority in the country is required to carry out an annual review of all electors in their area. We're legally obliged to contact every household asking them to confirm whether the information we hold on the electors at their property remains accurate.

You should have recently received your annual canvass form in the post. It's important that you respond so that you're able to vote in any elections held next year.

No changes to make?

If you don't need to make any changes, you can use our automated online, text or freephone numbers to let us know. Instructions can be found at the top of your form.

Using the automated systems saves SCDC both time and money, and you can use them 24 hours a day. Remember if you use this service, you do not need to send back your form.

Need to make changes?

Make any changes to the form as required, and return it to us as soon as possible.

Opting out?

Regardless of how you choose to register, every household has the option of opting out of the edited version of the register of electors. If you choose to opt out, then your details will not be included on the version available for sale to the public. Don't worry though, you will still be able to vote.

For more information see www.scambs.gov.uk/elections, or contact 03450 455214, andrew.francis@scambs.gov.uk

Ways to get involved

If you've any suggestions for improving services, or if you've any concerns about your local community and you'd like to ask SCDC for help, why not submit a petition?

Paper petitions are welcomed, and we also have an e-petition facility at www.scambs.gov.uk/petitions, where you can publish a statement and encourage other residents to add their names.

If you haven't previously done so, you'll need to register as a new user on the website, which then lets you sign up for email notifications of forthcoming meetings and new issues which might affect your local area.

You're always welcome to attend our meetings, at which you can speak or ask questions of the councillors (conditions apply).

For more information see www.scambs.gov.uk/publicspeaking or contact Democratic Services, 03450 450 500, democratic.services@scambs.gov.uk

Cabinet - roles and responsibilities

There were a few changes announced at SCDC's annual meeting in May, including the election of Cllr Tony Orgee as Council Chairman. Cllr Orgee is a ward councillor for the Abingtons and this is his first year as chairman. He'll be supported by Vice Chairman, Cllr David Bard.

Cllr Manning said "One of the small changes made to Cabinet is the introduction of a new portfolio for economic development. This reflects our commitment to working with businesses to ensure our economy continues to prosper."

As a whole, Cabinet is responsible for:

- Proposing new policy and the budget
- Promoting the Council's interest in partnership
- Implementing, with the SCDC officers, decisions of the full Council

1. **Leader** – Cllr Ray Manning
2. **Deputy Leader, Finance and Staffing** – Cllr Simon Edwards
3. **Environmental Services** – Cllr Sue Ellington. Cllr Ellington is also responsible for **Member Development**
4. **Housing** – Cllr Mark Howell. Cllr Howell is also responsible for **Equality & Diversity**
5. **Northstowe and New Communities** – Cllr Tim Wotherspoon
6. **Economic Development** – Cllr Nick Wright
7. **Policy and Performance** – Cllr Tom Bygott
8. **Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change** – Cllr Peter Topping

For more information about Cabinet go to www.scambs.gov.uk/cabinet You'll also find details on how to get involved as well as what's coming up.

Your council, your services

The money you pay in council tax helps to fund a wide range of services from the county, district and parish councils, in addition to the police and fire services.

We collect the full council tax for all of these authorities but we only keep a small share of it – for example in 2011/12 just £115.46 (8%), that's £2.22 a week of the £1,456.09 collected on a Band D rated home.

Like all councils, we're facing a situation of doing more for less and having to make tough budget decisions whilst making sure there is as little negative impact on our residents as possible.

This year, with some help from the Government, we were able to freeze our share of the council tax to make sure our residents are not put under any extra financial pressure.

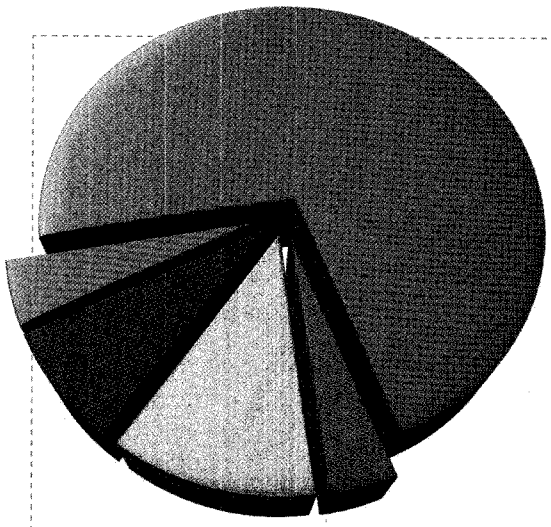
Although we've received what's called a formula grant from Government, which in the past has been almost half of our funding, we're now faced with cuts. This amount has reduced by £1.08million, and will go down further next year. So, we've had to make savings - £2.3million by the end of 2011/12 and we'll make further savings of around £600,000 by the end of 2013/14.

Big steps towards these savings are shown in the early results from the introduction of the blue bin scheme. We've saved £305,000 from October 2010 to March 2011, and a further £10,000 a month since then. You can find out more on pages 26 and 27.

Over the next 12 months, we'll be working on our customer contact review. Not only will this improve access to our services but it has the potential to make significant savings in the region of £200,000 a year.

We have budgeted to spend £53.4million on services, but will raise only £6.9million from council tax in 2011/12. The extra money comes from a combination of business rates (redistributed by the Government), fees and charges, interest on council accounts and grants from the Government.

From the money we receive, we provide a wide range of council services, including environmental health, planning, strategic housing, bin collections, arts and leisure, conservation and sustainability, elections, council tax and housing benefits, as well as other community services.

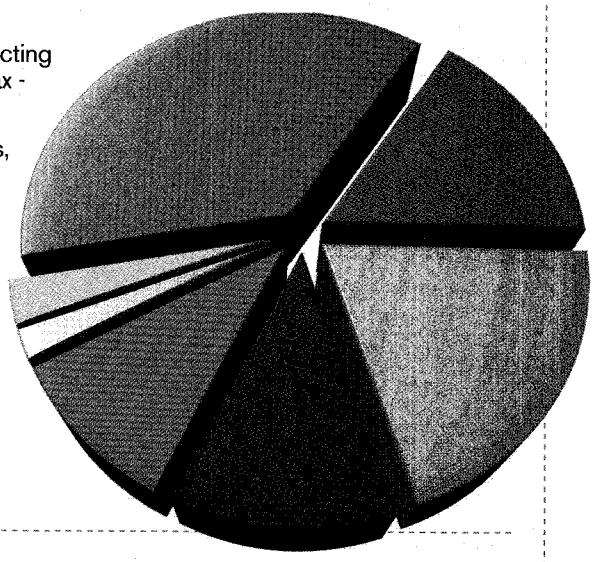


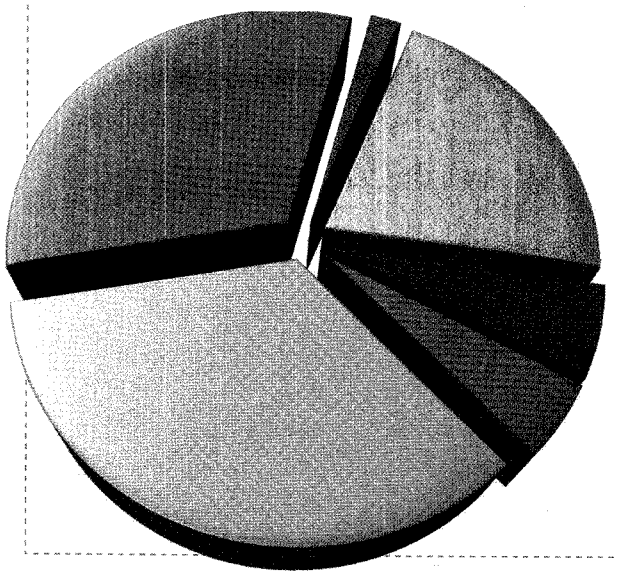
Here's how the average council tax bill for 2011/12 is split:

- Cambridgeshire County Council - **72%**
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority - **4%**
- Cambridgeshire Police Authority - **12%**
- South Cambridgeshire District Council - **8%**
- Average parish council charge - **4%**

Where SCDC's money goes:

- Environmental health, street cleaning, recycling, licensing and private sector housing - **37%**
- Planning, conservation and building control - **16%**
- Finance, administration, management, elections, collecting business rates and council tax - **20%**
- Developing new communities, sustainability, planning policy and supporting arts and leisure - **12%**
- Housing strategy and non-landlord housing services - **10%**
- Community safety and partnership services - **2%**
- Developing policy and communications - **3%**





Where the money comes from:

- Council tax - **32%**
- Interest on savings - **2%**
- Redistributed business rates - **21%**
- Grant from Government (Revenue Support Grant) - **6%**
- Using up savings - **5%**
- Grants, fees and charges - **34%**

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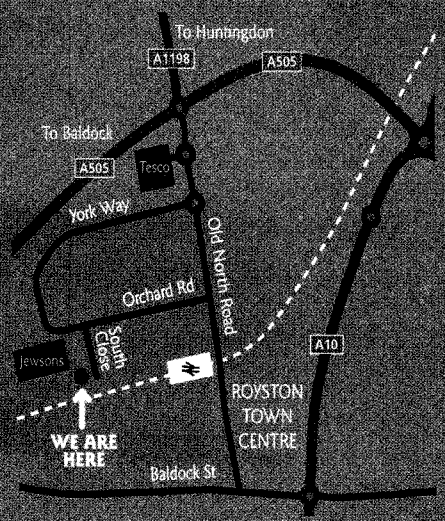

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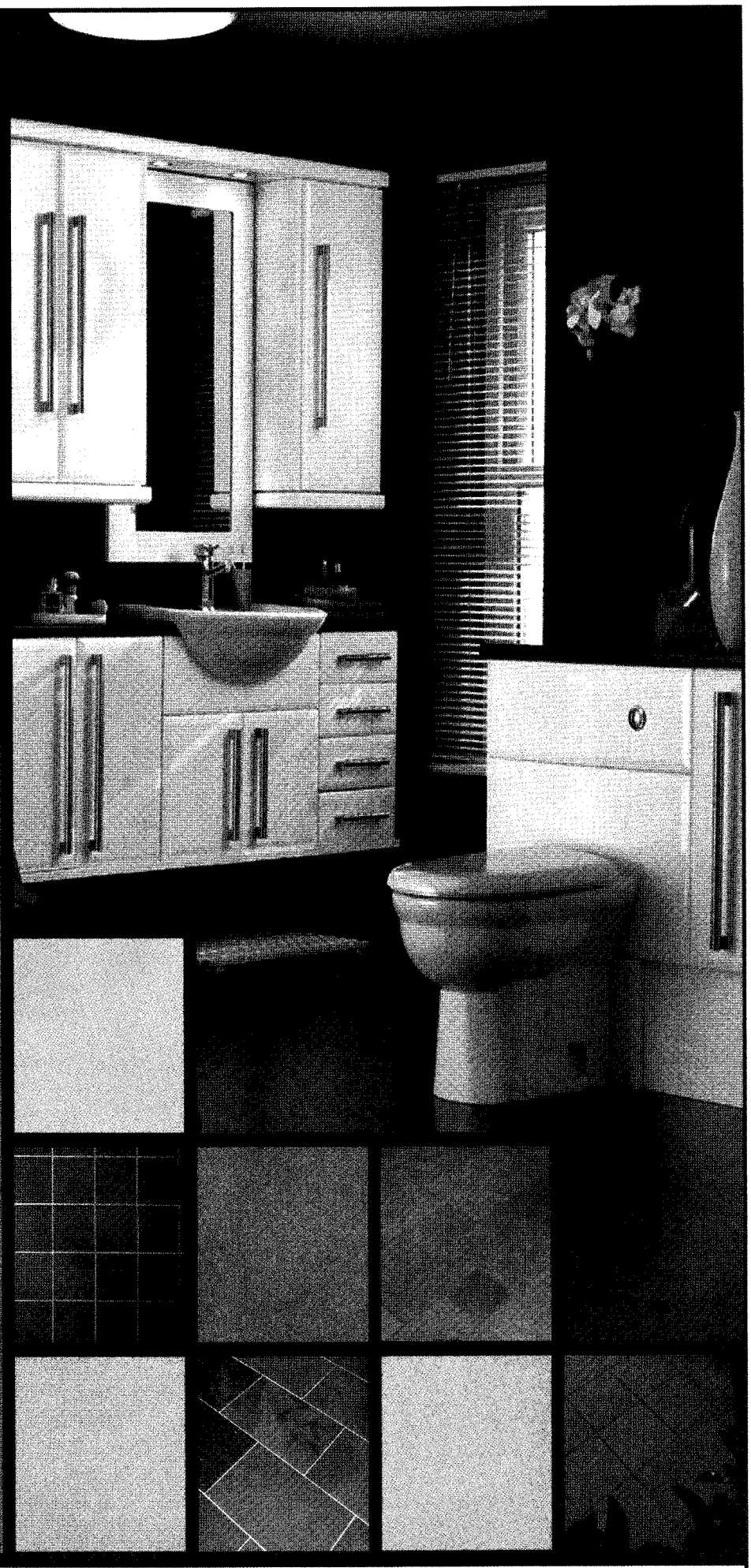
Royston bed Centre



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young voice

We've had lots of interest and ideas from you about your page and we'll be featuring them over the coming months.

Please keep your letters and emails coming in so that we can make sure we're including things that you want to know more about – just fill out the form below to let us know. Other things that will be coming up in the next few issues include local young people writing about what's going on in their areas, tips on homework and revision, and more about what children can do to help and take part in the things we do at South Cambridgeshire District Council. We've had one suggestion that the page could be a mini pull out magazine so that you can take it away and read it separately. We'd really like to know what you think about this idea.

ideas for your magazine page:

Are you interested in writing a piece for the magazine? Yes ☐ No ☐

Your name: _ _ _

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If there is a course you would like to see offered in the Sawston area, or indeed if you could offer a course, then please get in touch with us. Details below.

For more information and to book courses contact:

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New Road, Sawston CB22 3BP
Tel: 01223 712424
Email: community@sawstonvc.org

Cambridgeshire County Council

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The Family Link Service needs carers who can provide:

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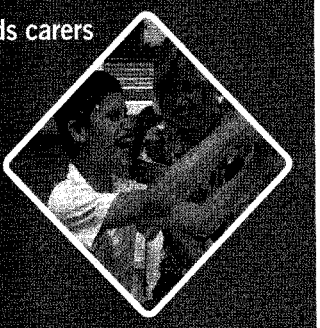
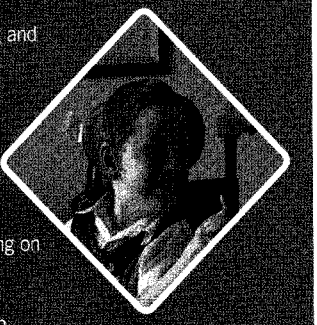
- In particular able to
  - Support children with
    - Autistic Spectrum Disorder
    - Behaviour which challenges
    - Complex health and/or moving and handling needs.
  - Provide breaks to more than one child





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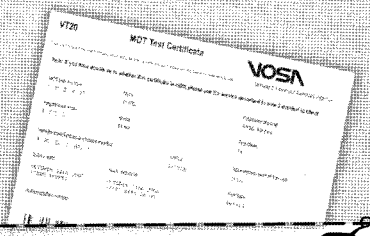

Offer 2:
Service & MOT
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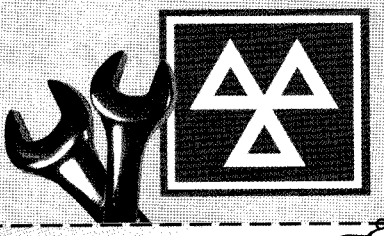

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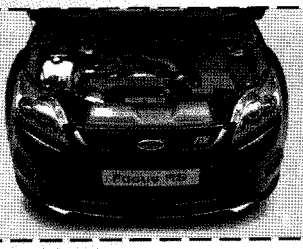

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With natural energy resources fast running out, we have no alternative but to look to new greener, renewable alternatives.

Last year, the **Feed-in Tariff (FiT)** was introduced by the Government. This is a scheme which incentivises householders to generate their own electricity from renewable energy sources.

Beechdale Energy, based in the west Cambridgeshire village of Kingston, are accredited Renewable Energy Technology installers. Beechdale Energy are experts in solar energy capture and can design and advise on the right PV installation for any home or commercial building.

How does the Feed-in Tariff work?

- The householder purchases a **Solar PV** system from Beechdale Energy Ltd.
- An average 2kW system costs from **£8,000** and produces up to **1667kWh** of electricity **per year**.
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- The electricity generated is then used **FREE** by the householder with the remaining amount supplied to The National Grid.
- The householder is paid for **everything** generated, whether they use it themselves or not. They will also receive an additional payment of **3.1p per kWh** for 50% of the total that has been generated as an export payment (regardless of actual export quality)
- The **Feed in Tariff** is guaranteed for **25 years** and is linked in to the **Retail Price Index**.
- The return on investment: typically **10%** overall return, with likely savings of **£150 per year** on electricity bills.

Beechdale Energy in conjunction with sister company Beechdale Homes, have a wealth of experience in renewable installations. Providing a professional consultancy, design and installation service, Beechdale offer a **FREE** consultation and suitability evaluation.

For all enquiries call **01223 264520** or email **info@beechdale-energy.co.uk**

Latest update

Beechdale Energy have had a busy summer installing Solar Systems throughout Cambridgeshire. Follow us on Facebook or Twitter for latest installation updates

"We selected Beechdale Energy because we were impressed by their high quality proposal and competitive pricing. The project was carried out swiftly and efficiently by a team of highly competent professionals who clearly took pride in their work. Thank you Beechdale, we are delighted with our Solar PV installation" **Chris & Liz Ray, Haddenham**

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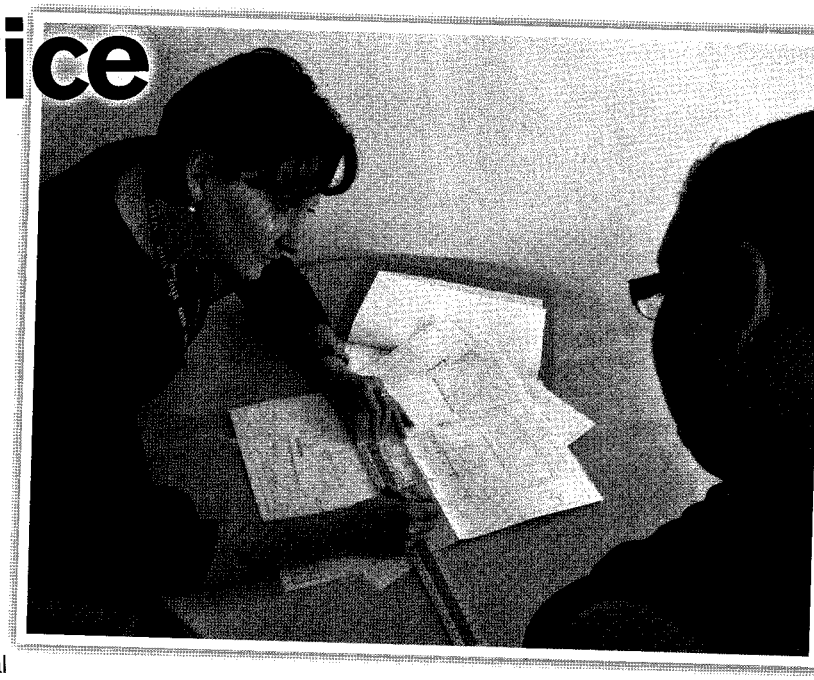
The performance of solar PV is impossible to predict with certainty due to the variability in the amount of solar radiation (sunlight) from location to location and from year to year. This estimate is based upon the Government's standard assessment procedure for energy rating of buildings (SAP) and is given as guidance only. It should not be considered as a guarantee of performance.

Planning advice



We provide a Planning Duty Officer service between 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday for anyone wishing to make direct contact with a planning officer either by phone (0345 045 5215) or in person at our offices.

Our customers have the choice of either 15 minutes free advice or, for a small charge, a more detailed written response with or without an arranged meeting.

The 15 minutes of advice comes from a planning officer and this service will continue to be provided for free.

More detailed and comprehensive written advice charges were introduced in July 2009 for customers considering applying for generally larger types of development.

We've reviewed these charges and, from 18 July, an additional charge came into effect. This is for more detailed advice about smaller developments for householders such as extensions to houses, fences and the erection of outbuildings.

Other changes include reducing the charge for advice on building new single homes, as generally they need less of our officer time to deal with than for schemes of several homes. Charges for advice on advertisement applications have also been introduced.

All of our charges relate to the cost of providing the service and are not for profit.

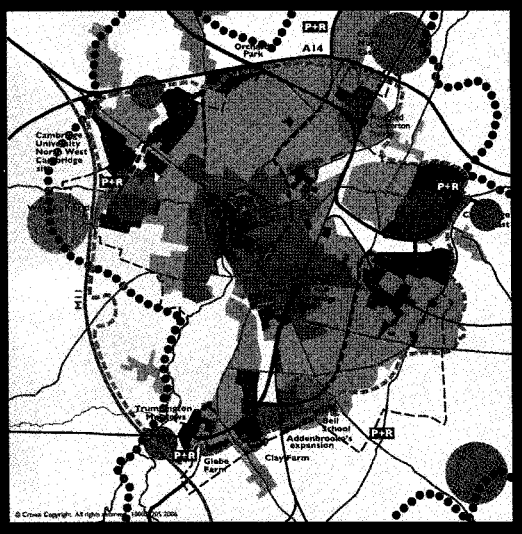
Full details can be found on our website www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/pre-App Advice.htm
or call the Contact Centre 0345 045 5215

Information on the Planning Duty Officer service can be found at
www.scambs.gov.uk/environment/planning/dutyofficer.htm

Growth sites: Growth area updates

Trumpington Meadows

The Joint Development Control Committee gave planning approval for 353 new homes and a primary school with community facility back in July this year. Our officers, along with Cambridge City Council and Haslingfield Parish Council continue to work together on the detailed plans for the school and community facility.



North West Cambridge

Along with Cambridge City Council, we're working with Cambridge University to prepare its planning application for submission this autumn.

Local residents can keep up-to-date with progress and have their say on a range of topics related to the development by attending one of the North West Community Forum drop in events. They begin again this autumn.

Cambourne

A public consultation event was held during the summer for the proposed new Secondary School. We're working with Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambourne Parish Council to prepare for the formal planning application to be submitted this autumn.

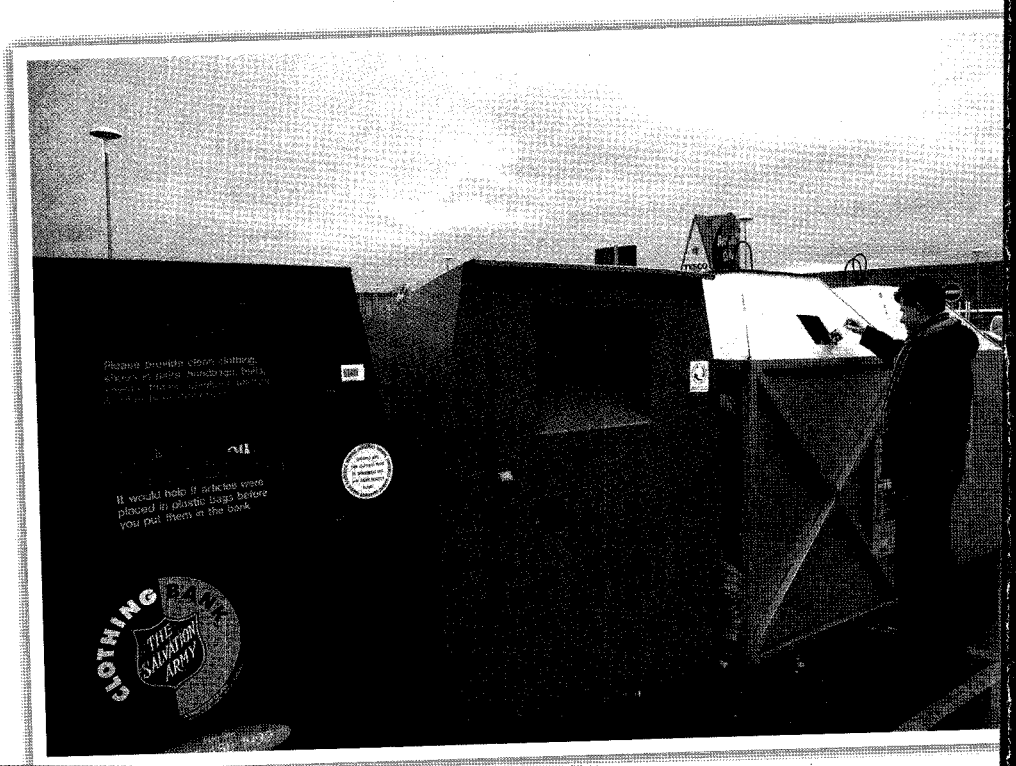
Orchard Park

Orchard Park now has 600 occupied homes, with permission having recently been granted, in principle, for a further 34.

Public consultation took place earlier in the year on initial plans for the centre, which will include shops, homes and a further area of public open space. Work continues on detailed design. Work is also continuing on the new Travelodge building.

Diary dates - consultations

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) will be consulting on two specialist-planning documents this autumn.



Waste Management Design Guide Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The draft Waste Management Design Guide SPD is for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough areas. It sets out design principles for developers and planners to make sure that sorting and managing waste is planned for within new residential and commercial developments, including within individual homes.

The guidance should make it easier for residents to recycle and compost waste and will make sure that developers know what facilities they are expected to provide within proposed developments.

The consultation will be for six weeks starting on 5 September 2011.

For more information visit the CCC website
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/minerals&wasteframework/recapwastemanagementdesignguidespd.htm

Residential Travel Plan Guidance Draft SPD

In the last edition of the magazine we told you about how CCC would be consulting in late summer on new draft guidance on how to prepare Residential Travel Plans. This consultation is now anticipated to take place later this year.

A Residential Travel Plan is a package of measures looking to reduce the need to travel and encourage walking and cycling, use of public transport, car sharing and car clubs. These travel plans accompany planning applications for major housing developments.

For more information visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/sustainabletravel/residentialtravelplans.htm

Northstowe

Plans for the new town of Northstowe are to shortly be re-launched.

The Joint Promoters (Gallagher Estates and the Homes and Community Agency) are working closely with us, to bring forward new homes and jobs as soon as possible. Northstowe will be an exemplar 21st century town; our aim is to ensure that it's a special place where people are proud to live.

The masterplan for the whole site is currently being reviewed and plans for the first phase of approximately 1,500 homes are being drawn up.

The need for improvements to the A14 is recognised and we are actively working with partners on developing options for an alternative, affordable scheme. This will build on the information and research that has been collected as part of the previous scheme. Initial findings are expected in mid 2012.

Ensuring Northstowe has the right level of services and infrastructure from the beginning is crucial, and both SCDC and Cambridgeshire County Council are working to identify what will be needed and how these will be provided.

Public consultation on the initial proposals will be held in October 2011.

A planning application for a first phase and a revised site wide masterplan is expected in early 2012.

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Social housing changes

The Government is making changes to how housing association and council homes are let. Two key changes will affect the amount of rent that some people pay and the length of time that they can live in a property. It will not affect existing tenants living in their current home.

In the past council and housing association homes have been let at a 'social rent'.

However, the Government has asked that some housing association homes are let at an 'affordable rent'. This could mean that rent may be higher than a comparable home with a social rent. But, it would still be lower than private sector rental. Housing benefit may not cover all of the costs of the rent being charged.

The Government is also proposing to allow the freedom to offer two different types of tenancies. If a person has a lifetime tenancy they can live in their home for as long as they want, as long as they abide by their agreement.

If someone has a fixed term tenancy, it'll be for a shorter time with an end date, likely to be between five and 10 years, but cannot be for less than two years (this is only applicable to affordable rents at the moment). The landlord is responsible for deciding how long the tenancy will be available. Advice and assistance on alternative housing options will be offered to tenants if their tenancy ends. Existing tenants wishing to transfer to another social home will need to check the type of tenancy they will be offered before signing a new agreement.

Properties are allocated through the Cambridge Sub Regional Home-Link scheme. For more information go to www.home-link.org.uk or call 03450 450051.

Round up from National Rural Housing Week

During July we were involved in the National Housing Federations (NHF) Rural Housing Week. We took part in various events to help show the important role affordable housing plays in maintaining small rural communities.

During the week, the campaign led by the NHF, gave a first-hand look at successful affordable rural developments and the real benefits they bring to local people.

• (above l-r) Geoff Hales (Hill Partnerships), Mike Goodson (Iceni Homes), Chris Jackson (Hundred Houses Society), Schuyler Newstead (South Cambridgshire District Council), Steve Kane (Hill Partnerships), Mary Shaw (Logic Homes) and Paul Kitson (Homes and Communities Agency).

Some of the events included:

- A ground breaking ceremony on a scheme to provide nine affordable homes in Whaddon Village by Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association. Councillor David Bard, Vice-Chairman, attended the event.
- There were archaeological digs to enable work to begin on site at The Valley, Comberton – where there are 11 affordable units being built.
- A scheme was completed and the tenants handed their keys at the University Arms Site in Hauxton, provided by Cambridge Housing Society.
- A foundation stone laying ceremony took place at Challis Green, Barrington by Hundred Homes. This scheme is providing 39 affordable units, and is the council's largest exception site development to date.
- The Moreton Close scheme at Cottenham, provided by Accent Nene has provided six new affordable homes for residents with a local connection to Cottenham.
- At Wisbeys Yard, Haslingfield, Granta Housing Society, part of Metropolitan Housing Trust held an official opening for a new affordable housing development. Current residents got to see the new homes and meet their new neighbours.

• (left) John Cross from BPHA, Cllr Bard, Rob Loudoun from Bramall Construction and Nigel Strudwick, Chairman of Whaddon Parish Council

For more information contact the Housing Strategy and Development Team, 03450 450 051

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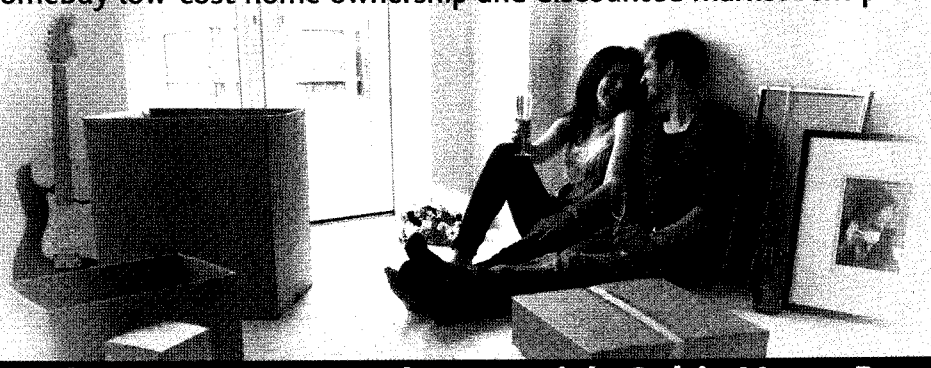

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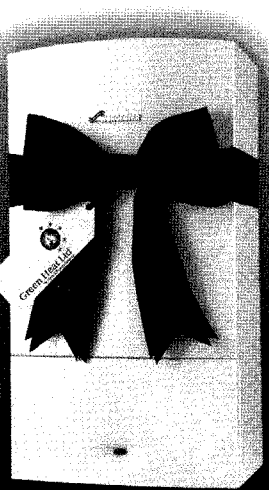

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We're delivering excellence

We recently found out that we've become one of only a handful of councils in the country to receive accreditation as a provider of Customer Service Excellence – across all our services.

This followed eighteen months of looking long and hard at what we do and making some changes, and finished up with a thorough independent inspection of how we understand and meet the needs of our internal and external customers. We were then awarded the accreditation this summer, along with a full report of all the findings.

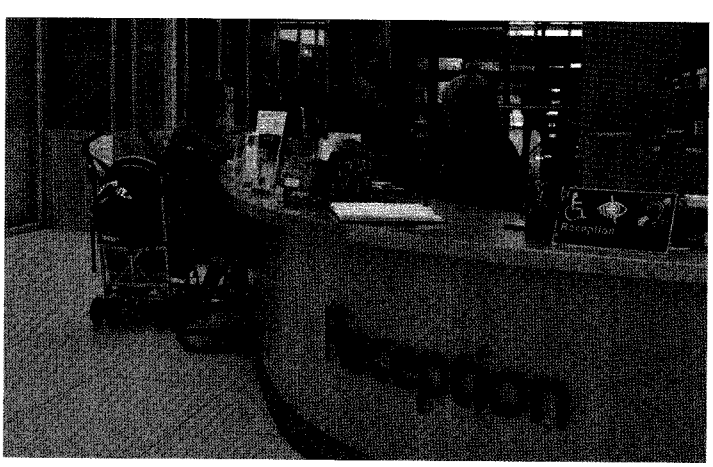
What is the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard?
It's a comprehensive set of standards, set originally by the Government, that help organisations understand their strengths and weaknesses in customer service, celebrate successes, and identify and make improvements. The award recognises not only the hard work of our staff, providing direct and support services on a daily basis; it also shows that we have a community which provides us with useful, constructive feedback, both positive and negative, which we can use to improve.

What does accreditation mean for us?
Gaining accreditation shows us that we know what we do well, but also where we still need to make improvements. So, whilst we're not saying that we do everything perfectly all of the time, we now have a better idea of where we've got to get better and have the capacity and skills to do so.

What did the project and assessment involve?
We began with a thorough self-assessment of our current service against five elements of the standard. This identified a number of areas of strength, and also several development areas.

We've spent much of the last year working to fill these gaps in key areas such as monitoring your satisfaction with our reception service, and recognising our colleagues when they've provided excellent customer service.

We had a pre-assessment last December, which showed that we were on the right track but still needed to develop in certain areas, especially around how we work together between our teams to ensure that you, our residents, get the best possible service.



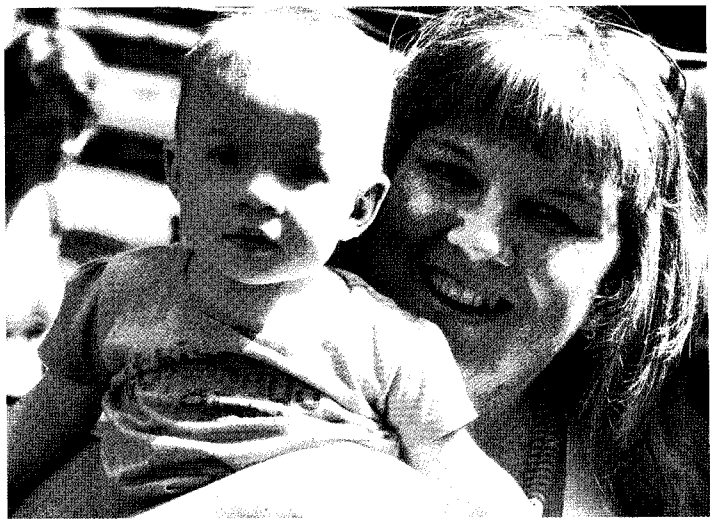
• Chief Exec Jean Hunter and Cllr Tom Bygott celebrate achieving CSE

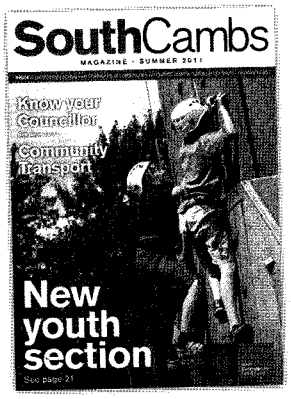
Meeting the standard – what the report told us

Customer insight
Customer insight is about knowing our customers, and tailoring our services to their needs. The assessment found that we have an in-depth understanding of our customer groups, based on recent and reliable information. For example:

- Identifying and working with residents having difficulty recycling their waste
- Comprehensive information about our Sheltered Housing tenants and their needs
- Listening to planning customers and making improvements

Organisational culture
The assessors found that we had used the standard as a way of changing our culture. They noticed a marked change in staff and members' attitudes and behaviour as well as senior management and political commitment to excellent customer service. The introduction of improvements to our staff appraisal scheme has given our managers a way to ensure staff set and meet objectives to improve customer service.





Information and access

We make information about key services widely available to all customers through a variety of different methods, with this magazine particularly commended. This reinforces findings from the recent reader survey for this magazine, that 82% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they find it informative. Of those who responded, 55% said they prefer to receive information about SCDC through this magazine.

We follow up information that we send out to ensure that it's easily understood, and our good practice was recognised by a customer who told the assessors:

> **"I wish everyone outside of the council would take as much trouble to explain things in easy language."**

Delivery

The assessors found that we had performed strongly against our objectives for 2010-11, meeting or exceeding them in almost all cases. They mentioned parish carbon reduction projects, our work to promote the district to new businesses, our community orchards programme and the work to increase the number of young people taking part in positive activities as particularly strong examples.

Our complaints procedure was seen as an effective way of sorting out when things have gone wrong so that lessons can be learnt to stop them happening again.

Timeliness and quality

We have put in place standards for all aspects of our performance and check these on a regular basis. We also measure comparative performance against similar organisations, and are in the highest category in areas such as housing services and recycling. The assessors welcomed the consultation on what you feel are reasonable response times to your enquiries, and noted that the results would help us plan future changes to the way you can contact us and how we then provide a speedy and helpful service.

What next?

We need to make sure that accreditation isn't seen as a 'tick box' exercise that is soon forgotten about. We're moving forward with a number of important projects, some of which are ongoing, some of which will come out of recommendations on areas where we need to improve. These include reviewing our customer service standards, and work to put in place new and improved ways to contact us, as well as improving our website, which with results from the reader survey showed is the second most preferred way to receive information.

We'll also be puting ourselves in your shoes to identify any problems or hold-ups you may experience and then work to remove them, making things easier for you.

The full report following the assessment can be seen on our website. If you would like more information contact Richard May, 01954 713366, richard.may@scambs.gov.uk

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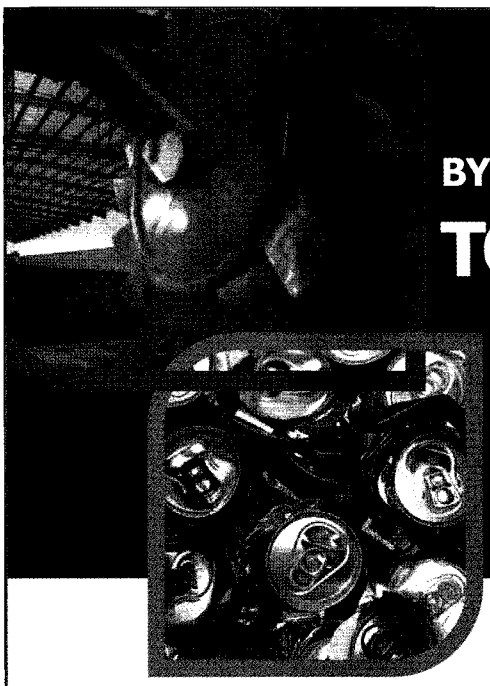

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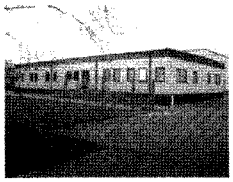

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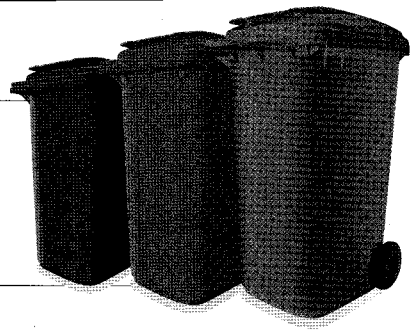


Collection dates

- **Bins must be out by 7am on your designated day of collection**

Day late collection | Green & blue bins | Black bin | Change to collection

Monday

Babraham, Balsham, Gt Abington, Gt Shelford, Harston, Hauxton, Hildersham, Hinxton, Ickleton, Lt Abington, Lt Shelford, Pampisford, Stapleford

12 Sept	19 Sept	26 Sept	3 Oct	10 Oct	17 Oct	24 Oct	31 Oct	7 Nov	14 Nov	21 Nov	28 Nov	5 Dec	12 Dec	19 Dec	28 Dec Wed	4 Jan Wed	10 Jan Tue

Bartlow, Castle Camps, Horseheath, Linton, Sawston, Shudy Camps

12 Sept	19 Sept	26 Sept	3 Oct	10 Oct	17 Oct	24 Oct	31 Oct	7 Nov	14 Nov	21 Nov	28 Nov	5 Dec	12 Dec	19 Dec	28 Dec Wed	4 Jan Wed	10 Jan Tue

Tuesday

Carlton, Coton, Gt Wilbraham, Histon, Horningsea, Impington, Lt Wilbraham, Madingley, Orchard Park, Six Mile Bottom, Teversham/ Cherry Hinton*, West Wickham, West Wratting, Weston Colville

13 Sept	20 Sept	27 Sept	4 Oct	11 Oct	18 Oct	25 Oct	1 Nov	8 Nov	15 Nov	22 Nov	29 Nov	6 Dec	13 Dec	20 Dec	29 Dec Thur	5 Jan Thur	11 Jan Wed

**Cherry Hinton: north of the railway as Teversham*

Fen Ditton, Fulbourn / Cherry Hinton*, Girton, Milton, Oakington, Stow-cum-Quy, Westwick

13 Sept	20 Sept	27 Sept	4 Oct	11 Oct	18 Oct	25 Oct	1 Nov	8 Nov	15 Nov	22 Nov	29 Nov	6 Dec	13 Dec	20 Dec	29 Dec Thur	5 Jan Thur	11 Jan Wed

**Cherry Hinton: south of the railway as Fulbourn*

Wednesday

Bar Hill, Childerley, Chittering, Dry Drayton, Knapwell, Landbeach, Longstanton, Swavesey, Waterbeach

14 Sept	21 Sept	28 Sept	5 Oct	12 Oct	19 Oct	26 Oct	2 Nov	9 Nov	16 Nov	23 Nov	30 Nov	7 Dec	14 Dec	21 Dec	30 Dec Fri	6 Jan Fri	12 Jan Thur

Boxworth, Caxton, Conington, Cottenham, Elsworth, Fen Drayton, Lolworth, Over, Rampton, Willingham

14 Sept	21 Sept	28 Sept	5 Oct	12 Oct	19 Oct	26 Oct	2 Nov	9 Nov	16 Nov	23 Nov	30 Nov	7 Dec	14 Dec	21 Dec	30 Dec Fri	6 Jan Fri	12 Jan Thur

Thursday

Cambourne, Comberton, Croxton, Eltisley, Graveley, Hardwick, Papworth Everard, Papworth St Agnes, Toft

15 Sept	22 Sept	29 Sept	6 Oct	13 Oct	20 Oct	27 Oct	3 Nov	10 Nov	17 Nov	24 Nov	1 Dec	8 Dec	15 Dec	22 Dec	31 Dec Sat	7 Jan Sat	13 Jan Fri

Abington Pigotts, Arrington, Bassingbourn, Bourn, Croydon, Gamlingay, Guilden Morden, Hatley, Litlington, Longstowe, Lt Gransden, Shingay-cum-Wendy, Steeple Morden, Tadlow

15 Sept	22 Sept	29 Sept	6 Oct	13 Oct	20 Oct	27 Oct	3 Nov	10 Nov	17 Nov	24 Nov	1 Dec	8 Dec	15 Dec	22 Dec	31 Dec Sat	7 Jan Sat	13 Jan Fri

Friday

Barton, Foxton, Grantchester, Gt Eversden, Harlton, Haslingfield, Kingston, Lt Eversden, Newton, Orwell, Shepreth, Thriplow & Heathfield, Whittlesford, Whaddon, Wimpole

16 Sept	23 Sept	30 Sept	7 Oct	14 Oct	21 Oct	28 Oct	4 Nov	11 Nov	18 Nov	25 Nov	2 Dec	9 Dec	16 Dec	23 Dec	03 Jan Tue	9 Jan Mon	14 Jan Sat

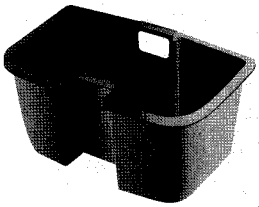
Barrington, Caldecote, Duxford, Fowlmere, Gt Chishill, Heydon, Lt Chishill, Melbourn, Meldreth

16 Sept	23 Sept	30 Sept	7 Oct	14 Oct	21 Oct	28 Oct	4 Nov	11 Nov	18 Nov	25 Nov	2 Dec	9 Dec	16 Dec	23 Dec	03 Jan Tue	9 Jan Mon	14 Jan Sat

What goes where?

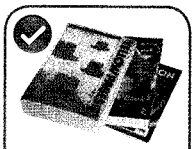
- **Bins must be out by 7am on your designated day of collection**
- **Close lids firmly**

Paper only caddy

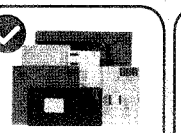


Paper

Newspapers & magazines


Telephone directories

Catalogues


Envelopes (with or without windows)

Shredded paper*

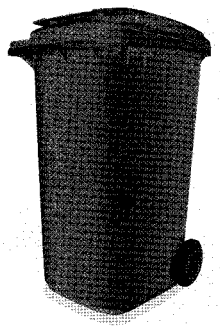
Junk mail

Jiffy bags, wrapping paper, greeting cards, tissue, cardboard & kitchen paper

* Place shredded paper in an old envelope before placing in the paper only caddy

- Place the caddy inside your blue bin
- Excess blue bin material will be collected if placed alongside the blue bin in a returnable container
- Place items loosely in the blue bin and not in carrier bags
- Rinse items to remove any food contamination

Blue bin



Plastic bottles

Plastic bottle tops & triggers

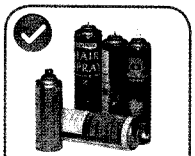
Plastic packaging (pots, trays & tubs)

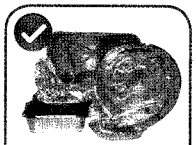
Plastic bags

Plastic film & clean food wrapping

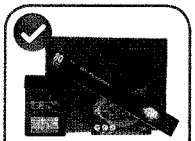
Glass jars & bottles

Food & drinks cans


Aerosols

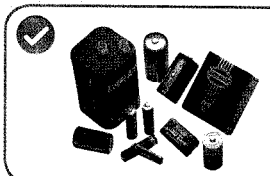

Tin foil & foil trays

Cartons (e.g Tetrapak)


Cardboard

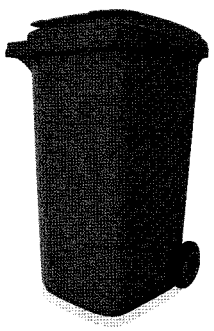
Polystyrene
Pyrex, flat glass, non packaging plastic e.g toys, bowls

Battery bag


Batteries inc. AA & AAA cells, button batteries, size C & D and any laptop & mobile battery

Lead acid batteries e.g. vehicle batteries

Green bin



Garden waste

Cooked/uncooked food waste (meat, fish & dairy)

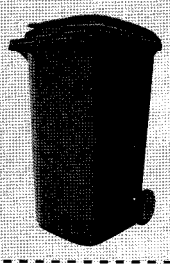
Kitchen paper and tissues

Any type of cat litter
Cartons (e.g. Tetrapak) - put in blue bin
Turf and soil - due to its weight
Any type of plastic inc bags/sacks

Biodegradable bags (cornstarch, potato starch)
Corrugated cardboard - put in the blue bin
Cardboard - put in the blue bin

- Excess green bin material cannot be collected. Please compost it or take it to Milton or Thriplow Recycling Centre

Black bin



Non-recyclable / non-compostable material

- Please use your black bin for material that cannot be placed in green or blue bins
- Excess black bin material cannot be collected. Please take it to Milton or Thriplow Recycling Centres
- Nappies should be placed in the black bin
- Empty and full paint tins cannot be collected. Please take them to Milton or Thriplow Recycling Centres

For more information visit www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling or call 03450 450 063

TEAR ME OUT & STICK ME TO YOUR FRIDGE

Wheelie good results

Our blue bin and paper only caddy scheme is now a part of many residents' daily routine. As it's now been running for several months we took the opportunity to see how it's performed. As promised in the last issue, here's what we found out.

The blue bin and paper only caddy were introduced so that we could:

✓ Recycle more ✓ Save money ✓ Make recycling easier

Has this been achieved?

✓ **Recycle more**

- Over 60% of all waste is now recycled or composted
- A 10% reduction in black bin waste thanks to increased levels of recycling

✓ **Save money**

- Around £305,000 has been saved in the first seven months and savings look set to continue
- In addition, savings of a further £10,000 per month have been made since the start of the new financial year
- 17% more paper has been collected through the caddy than the old green box scheme
- Income from paper collected is helping to reduce the cost of the service

✓ **Make recycling easier**

Results from a recent recycling service survey show very high levels of customer satisfaction amongst South Cambridgeshire residents. Earlier this year, 2,000 surveys were sent out about the recycling service and over 1,000 responses were received.

- An increase in participation rates from 87% to 93%
- 91% of respondents felt that the introduction of the blue bin had improved the recycling service
- 90% of respondents were satisfied with the blue bin service

Room for improvement

Results from the blue bin evaluation showed us that there is still room for improvement.

Cllr Ellington says "There is still more that we can do to achieve a higher recycling rate, for example it's estimated that 84% of all food waste is still going in the black bin - this should go in the green bin so that it can be composted, and 10% of paper is still going in the black bin when it should go into the paper caddy."

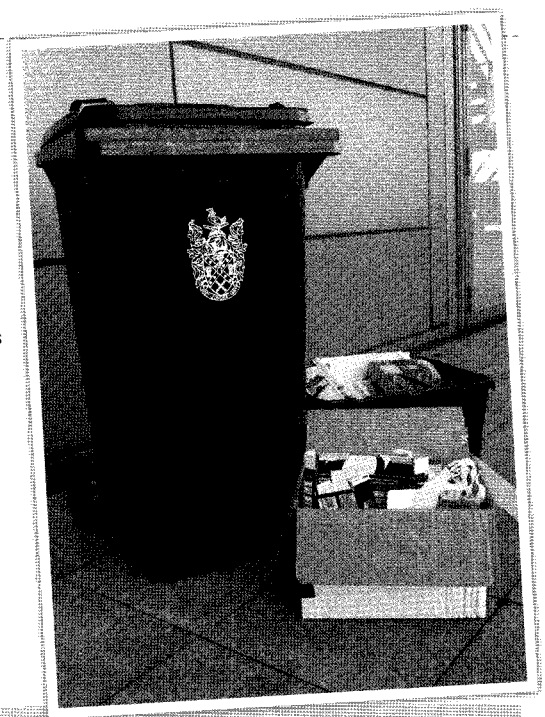
We asked some of you how you feel our service could be improved. These are some of the things that you told us.

"Crews to clear litter dropped during collections."

"More detailed and accessible information on materials accepted in the blue bin and paper only caddy."

"Extra capacity to store recycling."

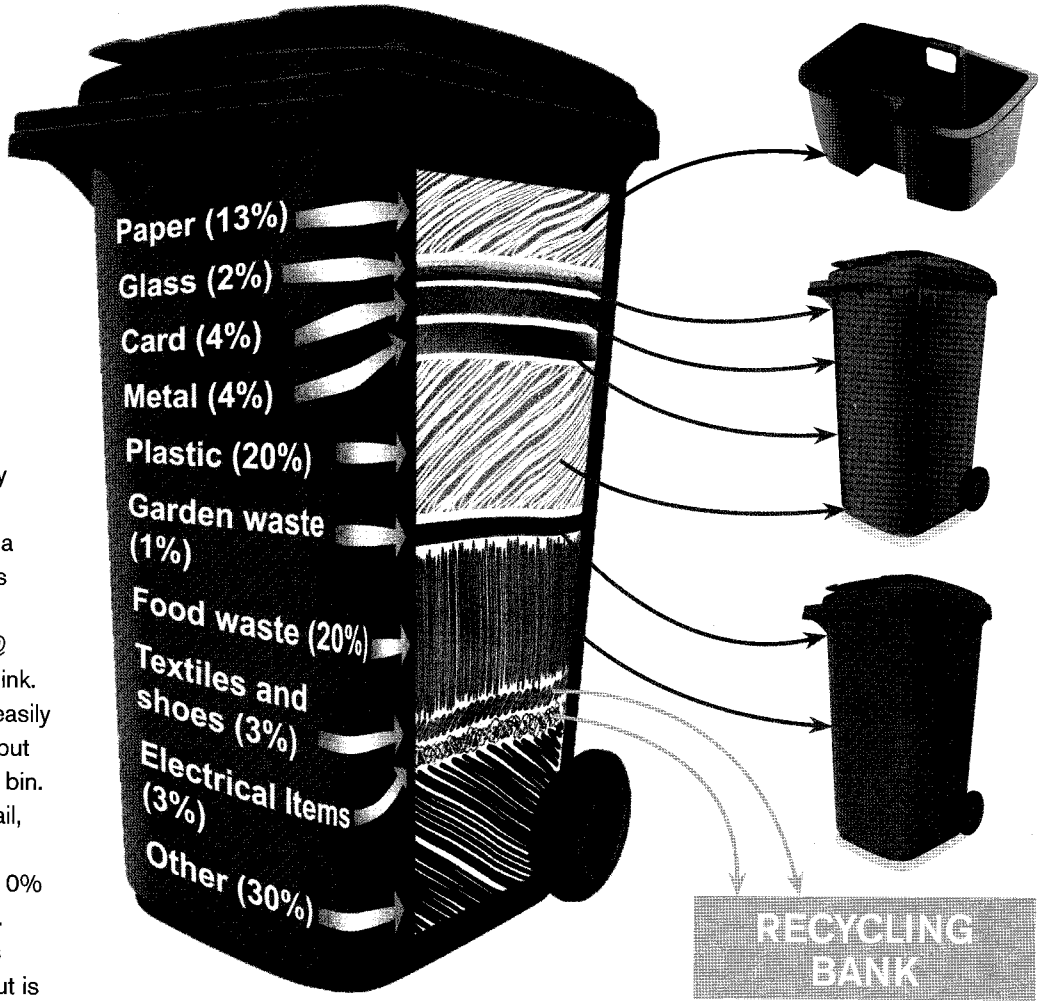
"Crews to return bins back at the collection point after collection."



So, we will:

- Collect any extra recycling placed alongside your blue bin in a returnable container such as a green box (or you can use a cardboard box which we'll recycle as well)
- Regularly update our list of items accepted in the blue bin on the website www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling
- Provide additional crew training and supervision to ensure that every collection is carried out efficiently.

Have you ever thought about what still goes into the average black bin in South Cambridgeshire?



Food waste should be placed in the green bin for composting but currently 84% is still placed in the black bin.

We would like to know if providing a free kitchen caddy and supply of liners would help you to use your green bin more? Please email us at foodwaste@scambs.gov.uk and tell us what you think.

Kitchen paper and tissues can easily be composted through the green bin but currently 87% is placed into the black bin.

Paper such as newspaper, junk mail, directories and envelopes should be recycled in the paper only caddy but 10% of paper is still placed in the black bin.

Recycling paper not only preserves natural resources and saves energy but is also very valuable, generating an income for the service.

Metal packaging such as aerosols, drink/food cans and aluminium trays and foil should be placed in the blue bin for recycling but currently 50% are still placed in the black bin.

The great news is that residents are already putting less waste in the black bin than ever before. There is still a fantastic opportunity to do even more if everyone recycled or composted everything possible through the green bin, blue bin and paper only caddy.

Thank you for your continued support in recycling for South Cambridgeshire.

Cllr Sue Ellington, Environmental Services Portfolio Holder said "This is excellent news, we provide one of the most comprehensive recycling services in the country, and 91% of our residents feel that the introduction of the blue bin has further improved the service.

"There is a very low contamination rate in South Cambridgeshire (materials that shouldn't go in the blue bin) - just over 2%, for which we would like to thank residents.

"We're proud that our residents recognise the success of the scheme, and alongside this the savings that have been made to the service are fantastic."

Follow us on Twitter @southcambs where we also tweet reminders for bin days

Celebrating conservation work

On a sunny day in June the conservation team were accompanied by a group of councillors to visit a selection of sites and to present the 2011 SCDC Conservation Awards.

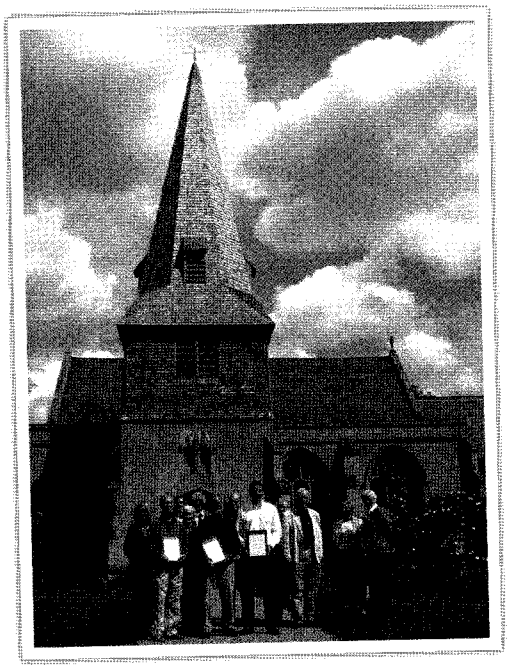
The awards recognise and celebrate best practice for conservation work to the natural or historic and built environment.

The tour began with a visit to the church of St Peter and St Paul in Steeple Morden where the Friends of the church had raised funds to arrange for the repair of the tower and spire by the Lindford Group and Archimage Architects.

The unusual shingle covered spire and tile clad belfry were added above its south porch in 1670 following the collapse of the original spire in 1625. The tiles had failed and become loose and many of the cedar shingles were missing or warped, so it was becoming susceptible to decay and posed a danger to the public.

Barbara Clarke, Conservation Assistant, said "The repairs, helped by a grant from SCDC, have been carried out to a high standard and are the result of close working between craftsmen, professionals and the local community."

A trip then onto Meldreth met with the River Mel Restoration Group, who explained how their careful work has improved the river for water voles and fish, as well as the occasional passing otter.



• St Peter and St Paul Church Steeple Morden

• Les Brierley and Steve Hawkins (RMRG) with councillors

An extremely informative tour was given by the group's Chairman Steve Hawkins who explained how they used brushwood to re-build the riverbanks. Rob Mungovan, Ecology Officer said "I'm particularly pleased to see the group learn about their river, and to plan their restoration work with a wide range of volunteers from the local community."

Packed lunches were eaten in the splendid grounds of the Mary Challis Garden in Sawston. Volunteers from the A.M Challis Trust Limited excitedly took the party on a tour of the restored gardens and explained how Mary Challis had been so incredibly generous to leave her house and garden to the village.

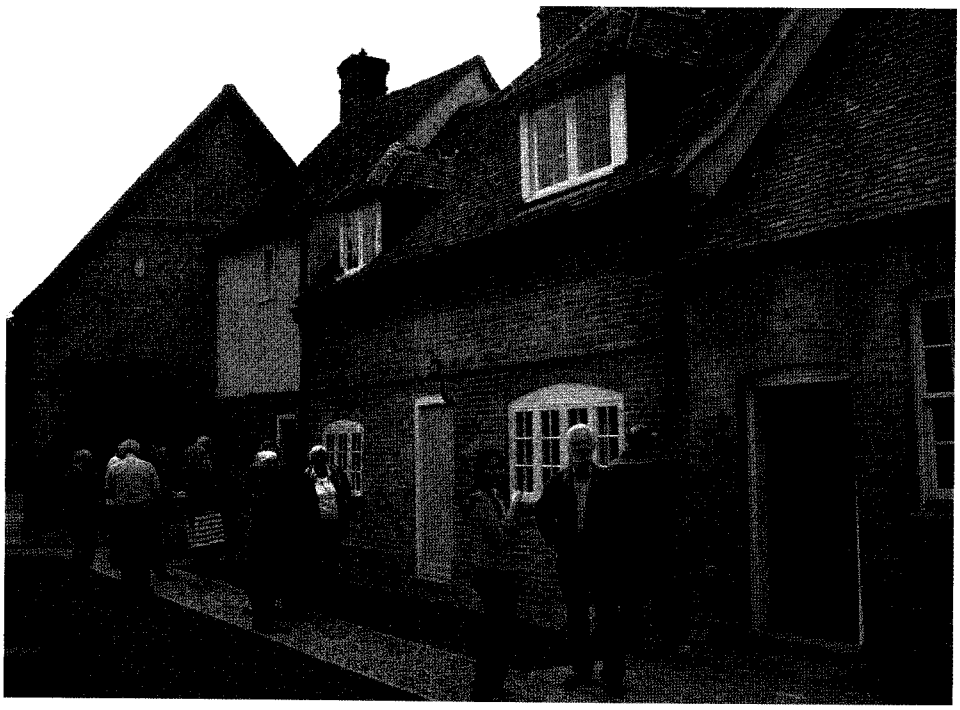
Andrew Grimmer, Trees and Landscape Technician said "This Victorian garden has been transformed from a near wilderness to an oasis of calm only yards from the high street by an enthusiastic team of local volunteers, helped with advice from our conservation team."

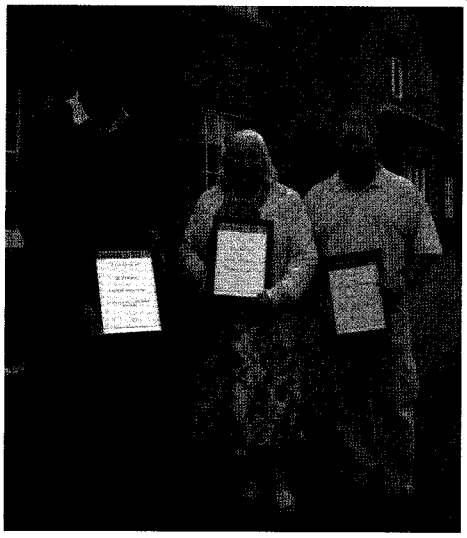
A short drive took the tour to Fulbourn Manor where George Collin and Sons Limited has undertaken repair and

• Mary Challis garden Sawston

conversion work at the coach house and stables. The owners, Mr and Mrs Townley, proudly showed the councillors the completed work and explained how they intended to use the property.

Corrie Newell, Principal Conservation Officer, said "This has been a very complex project due to the poor and damp condition of the buildings, which had been derelict for many years before their repair and conversion. They were converted very sensitively, using traditional methods and appropriate modern materials such as limecrete. The repairs and new details such as doors and windows had been very well considered and ensured the preservation of these





● (above) Mr Caulton, Miss Saunders and Mr Hardingham (Cambridge Joinery) outside cottages at Horningsea with their awards

● (left) Inspecting conversion work at Fulbourn Manor

prominent and attractive listed buildings for the future."

Next was a visit to see a scheme where Crittall windows and modern doors at St. John's Cottage and Meadow View in Horningsea were replaced with historically appropriate joinery with help from a grant.

An old photograph from 1914 was found at a village history day which confirmed that the proposed designs were exact matches for the original joinery. Shona Smith, Conservation Assistant said "This project, where two neighbours have worked closely together, shows clearly how changes can both enhance the appearance of properties and also the conservation area."

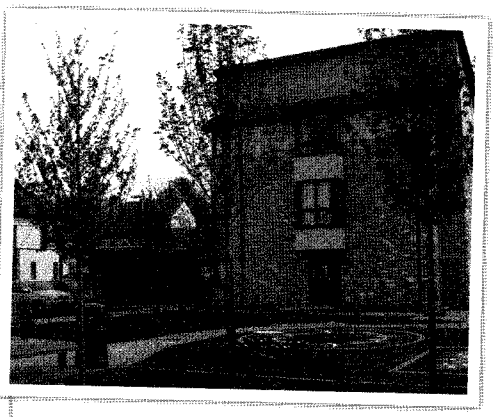
On arrival at Clayhithe, Waterbeach the group took a short walk with the River Manager from the Conservators of the River Cam. They were shown the pollarding of veteran willow trees and new planting to ensure that the Haling Way will continue to be tree-lined in the future and provide a picturesque back drop for walkers, cyclist or boaters as well as a habitat for wildlife.

Roz Richardson, Trees and Landscape Officer said "It was a great opportunity to work with the Conservators of the River Cam to provide trees so that the characteristics of this landscape can be maintained. SCDC hopes to provide further trees over the next few years as part of the parish planting scheme".

Last was a visit to Merrington Place in Impington (the former Unwins site), where Campbell Buchanan LLP and the Huck Partnership Ltd have created a sensitively landscaped residential development that includes a community orchard.

Two Matthew Lane Sanderson sculptures were unveiled that took their inspiration from the site's history as the home of a seed company. Catriona Campbell, Landscape Assistant, said 'The orchard gives the new residents a shared source of fruit, and the wild flower grassland beneath the trees further enhances the wildlife habitat.'

● Cllrs Johnson and Hockney present Cam Conservators' River Manager Pip Noon with her award



● Landscaping at Merrington Place

Cllr Peter Topping, Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change said "These awards recognise that throughout South Cambridgeshire local projects are ensuring that our historic and natural environment continues to be protected and enhanced.

"It's particularly heartening to see communities coming together for the benefit of their villages."

The conservation and design team wish to thank all those who gave their time to make the day interesting and inspiring.

For more information go to www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Conservation/Awards/default.htm

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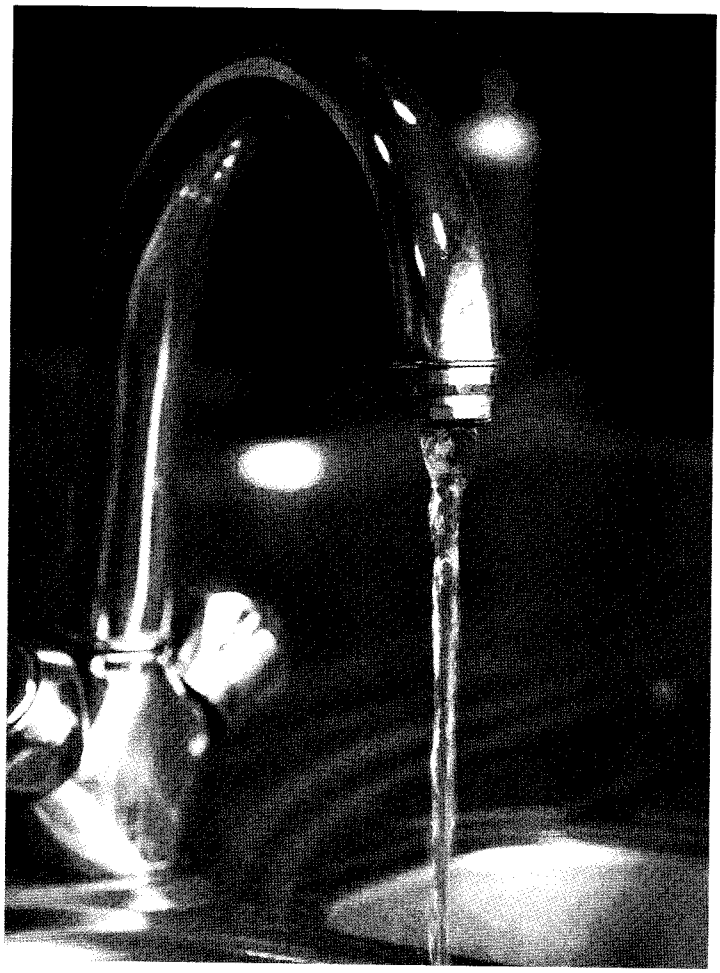


How do you get your drinking water?

There are some properties in South Cambridgeshire that use 'private water supplies' – meaning drinking water supply that comes from a borehole, well, spring or stream rather than by a mains water company.

Where a private water supply is used for more than one house, or for commercial purposes in premises or in a public building then the Private Water Supply Regulations that came into force on 1 January 2010 apply.

We're responsible for regulating these supplies. We'll visit to inspect and take water samples, generally from your kitchen tap. Charges apply for all visits and samples.

If where you live is the only property supplied by a private water source and it's just your family drinking the water, we will only take a sample if you ask us to do so.

If you have a private water supply and have not been contacted by us in the last year please contact us on 01954 713140 **or email** emma.trollope@scambs.gov.uk

Tattoo Safety

Put your safety first if you decide to get a tattoo - is the message from our environmental health experts.

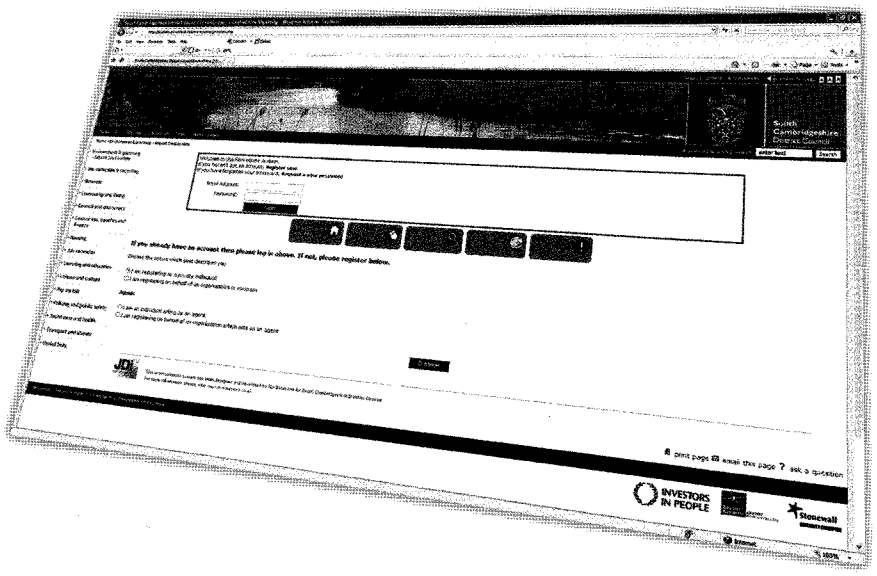
If you visit a studio that's dirty you could pick up a disease or get a serious infection, such as Hepatitis or HIV. Don't forget, you have to be 18 – it's illegal for a studio to give a tattoo to anyone underage.

Here are some tips to help you choose where to go:

- Premises should be spotlessly clean, including the floor
- Spreader or wiping materials should be disposable
- The tattoo artist should have good personal hygiene and wear disposable gloves (non latex)
- Ensure they use disposable needles and that they are opened in front of you from sterile packaging
- Ensure that the pigment fluid is poured into a cap or pot and that the needle is not put into the bottle. If this happens, you're sharing body fluids with others
- Check they are displaying a certificate of registration from the environmental health department

If you are unsure or would like more information contact environmental health, envhealth@scambs.gov.uk, 03450 450 063

New website makes it easier to report envirocrimes



We're dedicated to looking after our beautiful district. To maintain and improve South Cambridgeshires environment we tackle a wide range of anti-social behaviour that affects our streets and countryside, including littering, fly tipping, graffiti, and abandoned vehicles. This antisocial behaviour is called 'envirocrime'; not only can it affect our quality of life but can also indirectly increase our fear of crime.

Our residents pay a big part in helping us to tackle envirocrime. To make it easier to report things such as abandoned vehicles or fly tipping we've launched a new website. You can send us pictures of the problem and pinpoint the exact location on a map making it easier for us to find and deal with it. You can also check back to see what's happened and if the problem has been dealt with.

Use the website to report:

- Graffiti – photographs of the graffiti help police identify offenders
- Abandoned vehicles – give us as much information as possible including the vehicle model, colour and registration if known
- Litter
- Fly tipping
- Dog fouling

You don't have to send us photographs but it can help us. You'll also be able to check if anyone else has reported it. You can also use the site if you spot someone committing an offence – once again, giving us as much information as possible can help us to trace these people.

To report envirocrime to us please visit our website at www.scambs.gov.uk/report it or call 03450 450 063 all calls will be treated in confidence.

Changes for private sewers

A private sewer is a pipe that carries rain or wastewater away from more than one property to the public sewer.

A private (or lateral) drain is a pipe that carries wastewater away from a single property.

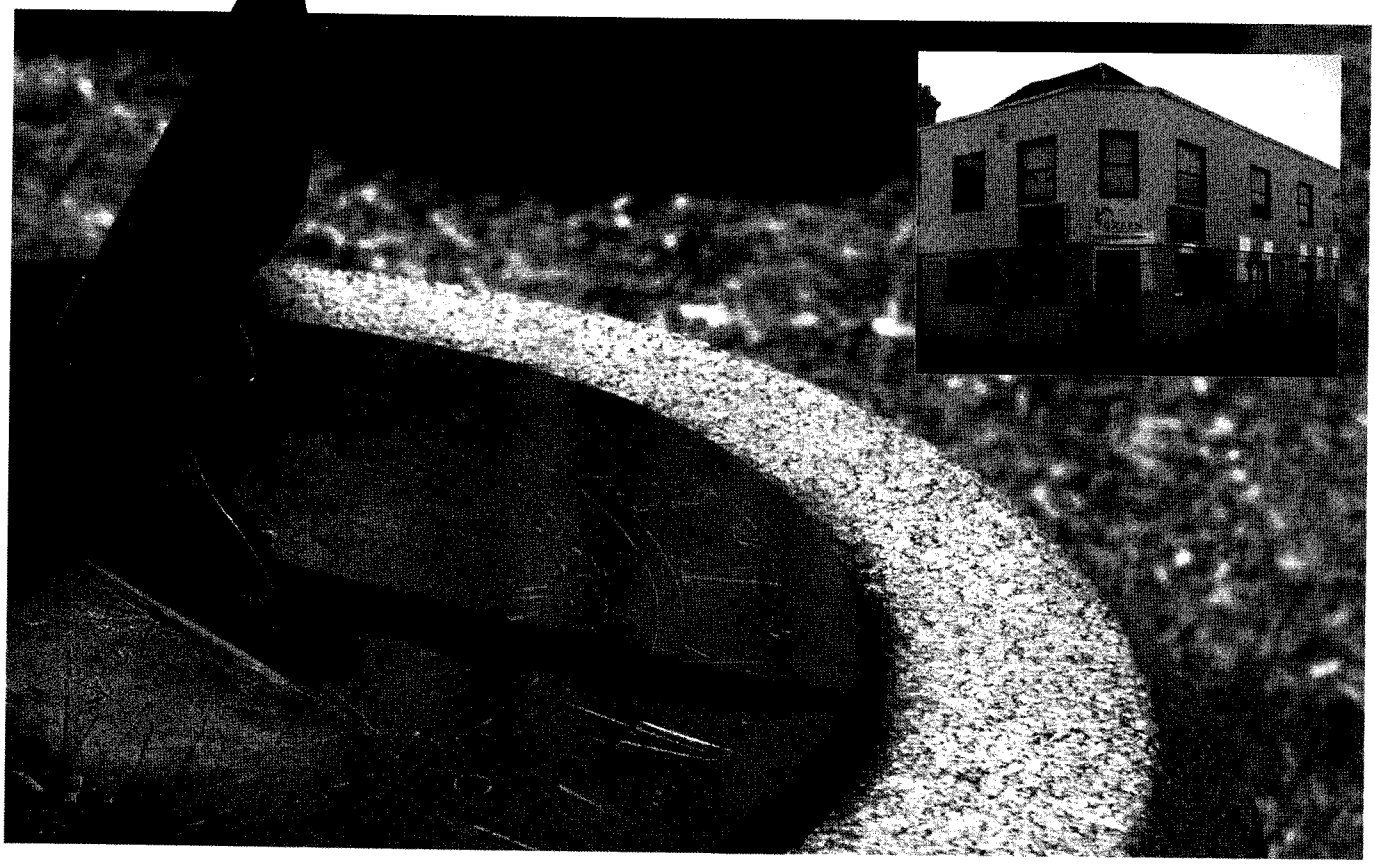
At the moment, many people have private sewers or drains and are responsible for repairing them if something goes wrong. Some residents only realise this when they have a problem and find out that they are the ones who have to fix it.

The Government has now decided that private sewers would be better looked after if they were part of the public sewer network. So, water companies will take over the responsibility of repairing collapsed and blocked sewers from 1 October 2011.

The changes will see the ownership of private sewers, that run under homes, gardens or in the road, and connect to the public sewer system, move from the homeowner to the water companies. Private drains will be the responsibility of home owners.

This change will give residents peace of mind from the nasty surprise of being charged for repairs to pipes, which they did not necessarily know they were responsible for.

It will happen automatically on 1 October, so you don't have to worry about doing anything.



THE SOLAR PV CLOCK IS SLOWLY TICKING TOWARDS APRIL 2012

Solar PV has never been more in vogue. Even the fiscally astute Dragons in the Den have been wowed by the fantastic investment opportunities presented by this fast growing industry. See The Dragons' Den, Sunday 31st July 2011.

As more and more domestic homeowners take up this wonderful investment and socially green opportunity the industry braces itself for what will surely be an extremely busy six months.

The tariff was started in April 2010 and the government paper dictated that the tariff would not be altered until April 2012. As April looms ever closer more and more people are joining the Solar revolution whilst the optimum tariff remains available. Industry insiders predict not only will the tariff drop in accordance with the tariff table issued in the Government paper but will have an additional cut applied. This is essentially to bring the tariff back in line with the original return on investment figures of between 8–10%. The current reduction in the cost of installation has in some cases pushed up the ROI to as high as 17–18%. The fact that the tariff bracket applied when the install is complete is maintained, plus inflation, for the life of the tariff (25 years) means people are keen to sign up now.

GREEN Ltd are a solar PV specific company with a showroom and warehouse in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. With a second showroom opening in Bristol later on this year the company is bracing itself for a busy period ahead. Managing Director Paul Shiels said: "Over the past 18 months the Solar PV industry has gone from strength to strength. With the increase in April 2011 from 41.3p to 43.3p per unit generated the number of domestic homes having this technology installed has rocketed."

GREEN Ltd are a family run business with over 30 employees. We asked Paul why he felt customers should be embracing this new technology. "The FIT has taken the install of Solar panels away from the preserve of environmentalists and offers people a wonderful long-term, tax free, index linked financial investment. Combined with the equally as important factor of reducing your home's carbon footprint." Paul continued: "The sun is a wonderful, never ending source of energy, capturing it and utilizing its power for your own home in today's economic climate which sees spiralling electricity bills can only benefit us all."

With over 250 installs GREEN are one of the largest suppliers of bespoke systems in the South East of England. "We are constantly looking at our own costs and trying to offer our customers solutions and systems that do not break the bank. We have invested heavily in stock and have put ourselves in a position to offer people installed systems at sensible prices," said Paul.

GREEN Ltd have a special summer offer at present a fully MCS approved 3.84KW system with a 10 year warranty for £9999.00.

To book an a free appointment and survey contact GREEN on 01767 317806 or visit our website at www.global-renewable.com and fill out our online application.

Email : pauls@global-renewable.com

G.R.E.E.N.
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Scotsdales Gardening Talks for the Autumn

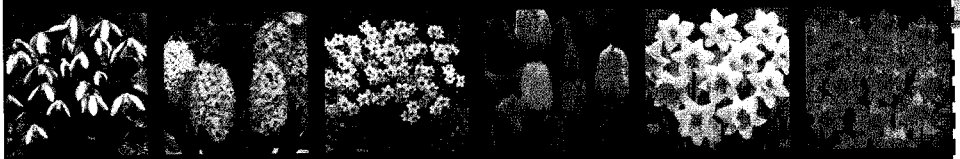
Thursday 1st September 7pm – 8pm
Talk on Bulbs by Johnny Walkers of Taylors Bulbs 'How to get the best out of your bulbs'.

Thursday 6th October 6.30pm – 7.30pm
'Autumn Winter Colour in Your Garden' a talk by the ever popular Andy McIndoe of Hilliers.

Thursday 13th October 7pm – 8pm
Peter Jackson of BBC Cambridge Radio and our own horticulturist will give you the key points of 'What to do in the Autumn Garden'.

Thursday 27th October 7pm – 8pm
New to Scotsdales Nick Dunn will talk on 'Modern Fruit Growing in your Garden'.

Bulbs ...plant now for spring colour throughout the season...



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Welcome

...to the tenth of our London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games features.

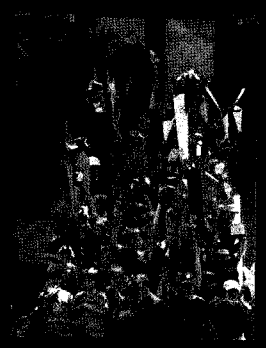
Cllr James Hockney SCDC Champion for the Olympics

With just over 300 days to go until the Olympic and Paralympic Games come to London we've been really busy supporting events and setting the Olympic legacy in place.

Youth Games plus competition

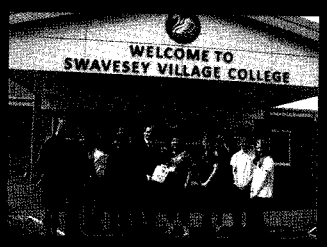
On 10 June over 500 children from special schools in Cambridgeshire took part in the Youth Games plus, a competition at St Ives outdoor centre. Each school represented a country taking part in the Paralympic games.

Mini olympics



The South Cambs School Sports Partnership, held Mini Olympics at Wilberforce Road athletics track in Cambridge on 21 June; 1400 year four children from schools across South Cambridgeshire took part in the fun. As always the tug-of-war was a favourite. The children wore t-shirts in the colours of the Olympic rings and brought their own Olympic torches to round off the closing ceremony with a splash of colour.

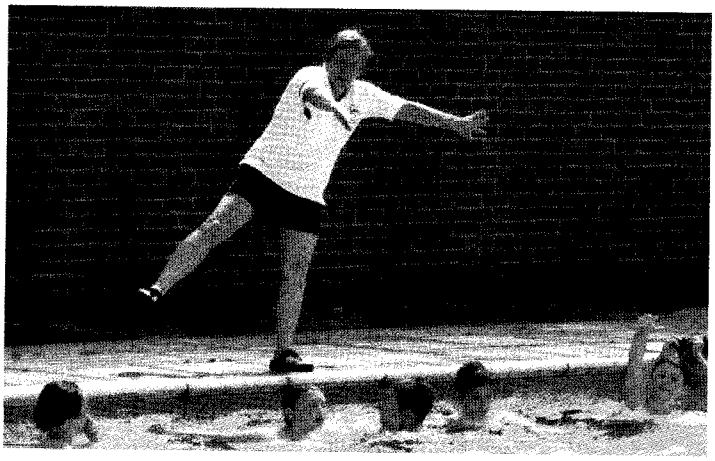
Swavesey get set



On 6 July, I presented Swavesey Village College with their plaque for joining the Get Set Network. The school has adjusted its whole policy and attitudes to encompass the seven Olympic and Paralympic values. Swavesey now join the other South Cambs village colleges and some primary schools who are also part of the Get Set Network.

Park life

We marked one-year to go with our annual Park Life event at Milton Country Park on 24th July. This year 3000 people took part in the fun, trying their best at a range of sports and activities throughout the day. We're now planning how our residents can get involved in the torch relay due to arrive in Cambridge in June 2012.



Swimming

We're currently supporting through funding, the South Cambs School Sports Partnership to deliver a swimming improvement programme for children aged 9-16 years in primary and secondary schools across the district.

Youngsters who are less able or confident at swimming have been identified for extra or 'top up swimming' sessions. They get six weeks of intensive swimming lessons at their local pool with the hope that by the end they'll be able to swim a minimum of 25metres unaided and float and pace themselves in the water.

In partnership with the South Cambs Sports Centres, this year all children and young people going through the programme have also received two free family swim vouchers to use throughout the school holidays; to encourage them to keep developing their swimming confidence.

Partnership Manager, Claire McDonnell said, "We're delighted to have the support of SCDC and the sports centres to deliver this programme, we have had over 200 children go through the programme during the summer term and overall the progress they have made in their swimming and water confidence has been staggering. Swimming is not only a healthy activity but an essential life skill and many of these children would never learn to swim if it wasn't for this programme."

For more information visit www.scssp.co.uk

Bonfire Burn 10K

There's a new race to add to your running calendar. Supported by us, the friends of Histon and Impington recreation ground are hosting a 10k race on Sunday 6 November 2011.

Starting at 10.30am from Histon and Impington recreation ground it will cover a multi-terrain course through North Cambridge, the Science Park and Impington. It's just £10 to enter for anyone over the age of 15 and a memento will be given to all finishers.

For more information and to enter go to [illegible] or call [illegible]

Walk for Fun!

Do you want to take that first step to a more active lifestyle? If the answer is yes, why not come along to one of the walk for fun sessions taking place in South Cambridgeshire. They are friendly groups, led by volunteers, allowing for all speeds of walkers. It's an excellent way to meet people and get fit while enjoying the local environment.

Groups currently take place at the following locations:

Bar Hill
Monthly Health walk, first Thursday and third Wednesday of every month at 10.30am
Meeting at Maple Surgery, Hanover Close, Bar Hill, CB23 8EH
Contact: Patricia Daniels **Tel:** 07917 874402
Email: danielsoohn@btinternet.com

Milton Country Park
Tuesday afternoons starting at 2pm from the visitor centre. There is no charge but there is a £2 parking fee.
Contact: Lyn Mason **Tel:** 01223 420060
Email: mcp@cambridgesportlakes.org.uk

Sawston
Weekly accompanied walk on Tuesday's at 11.30am from Sawston Medical Centre.
Contact: Jenny Parker **Tel:** 01223 727555
Email: jennifer.parker@nhs.net

Wandlebury Country Park
Thursday mornings, arrive at 9:50am to register for the extended walk (approx. 60 minutes) or arrive at 10:15am to register for the 30 minute walk. Meet at Wandlebury Stable Rooms. The walks are free of charge, but there is a £2 parking charge.
Contact: Janet Cornish **Tel:** 01223 243830 ext.202
Email: enquiries@cambridgeppf.org

We're looking to start weekly walks in Willingham and Papworth, if you're interested contact Helen on the details below:

If you think there is a need for a walking group in your village just let us know and we can help to get one started.
Call Helen Stepney on 03450 450500

New gym facilities in Gamlingay

After months of hard work, a £50,000 grant from SCDC and £40,000 from Gamlingay Village College, the new fitness workshop at Gamlingay Village College was officially reopened on Saturday 2 July.

Gym users will benefit from a range of new equipment including two new rowing machines, a Smith machine for weight lifting, two bicycles, a cross trainer, an upper body ergometer and two workout benches. Music lovers will also appreciate the newly installed iPod connections.

Cllr Tony Orgee, chairman of SCDC, cut the ribbon to officially open the new facility and said "I think this extension represents fantastic value for money and I hope the residents of Gamlingay will enjoy the new and enhanced facilities on offer."

Visitors to the opening were given free blood pressure and BMI checks by the trained staff, a service also offered in members' initial consultations.

ABOVE l-r Cllr Bridget Smith, David Croxon, chairman of GVC Leisure Ltd, Cllr Tony Orgee, Chairman of SCDC, Cllr Sebastian Kindersley, Michael Jones, Chair of Governors Gamlingay Village College

For more information contact

We've joined forces with Forever Active to provide exercise/activity classes for the over 50's. Sessions range from chair based exercises, which are suitable for people with mobility problems, to activities for the active 50 plus. From September a range of classes and activities will start to be advertised in South Cambridgeshire as well as in Cambridge City. Over time we will add to these to give as many residents as possible the chance to access a local class.

If you would like more information or latest brochure contact Kirsty Human, 03450 450500 or visit www.forever-active.org.uk

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New film for Sawston: Henry Morris – The Life and Legacy

• Henry Morris: His Life and Legacy with Phoebe Gilderdale, Margaret Jacobs and Peter Noble (on sound)

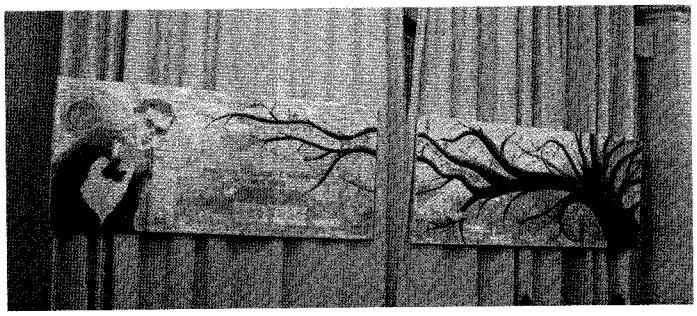
• Phoebe Gilderdale, Stephen Harmer

Film and Sawston are becoming synonymous. Not only is there a cinema with regular screenings for the local community, but young people in Sawston are becoming ever more ambitious in making their own films. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, their most recent production, 'Henry Morris – The Life and Legacy', pays homage to the visionary founder of the village college concept and was made to mark the 80th anniversary year of Sawston Village College's opening.

The film follows young people as they research Henry Morris, visiting the Cambridgeshire Collection and some of the other village colleges founded by him. At the same time, the film traces the story of Sarah, a fictional character who, as a trainee teacher, decides to make Henry Morris the focus of her final dissertation. She sets out to meet people who knew him to gain a better understanding of the man and his inspiring ideas. The film was warmly received at its premiere in July.

For more information about future screenings, contact Lesley Morgan.

South Cambridgeshire Decorative and Fine Arts Society – 'Young Arts'



As part of their 'Young Art' scheme, South Cambridgeshire Decorative and Fine Arts Society (SCDFAS) recently worked with Sawston Village College to support the creation of an artwork to mark the school's 80th anniversary year. Young people worked with artist Helen Lanzrein to create a three-panel piece using a collage technique favoured by children's picture book creator Eric Carle. The finished work formed the centrepiece of an exhibition in Michaelhouse, Cambridge in July.

Young People's Arts Awards

Young people from Castle Camps Youth Club recently completed their Bronze Arts Award as part of an arts project funded by Cambridgeshire County Council. The project, called artsMASH and part of a wider scheme which ran in youth clubs across South Cambridgeshire, involved young people participating in various art forms, including stage fighting and visual arts. The youngsters joined a total of 22 others who were recently awarded Arts Award certificates in the Sawston and Linton area.

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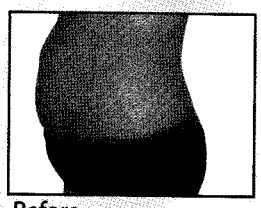
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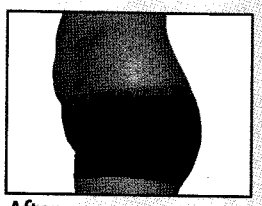
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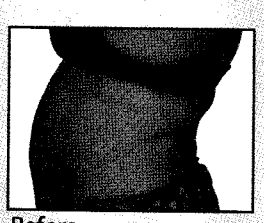
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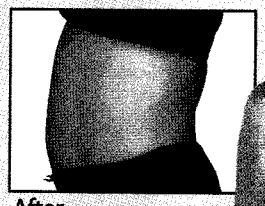
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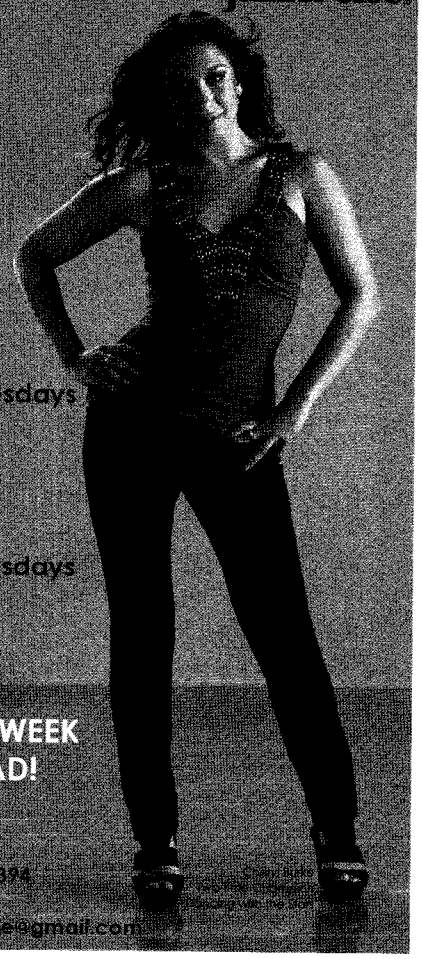

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Art in communities

One of the opportunities that new development in our district brings is the commissioning of artists by private developers to work with designers, engineers, parish councils and members of the public on a wide range of public art projects.

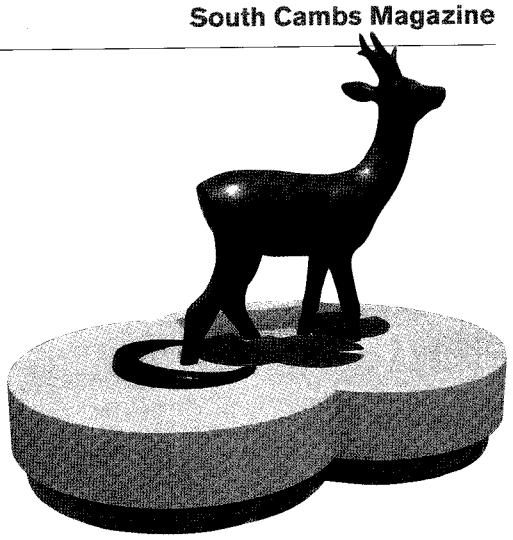
Iceni Homes in **Cottenham** commissioned Wendy Briggs to create a sign for Cottenham Village College. It was made from stainless steel in the form of a tree, unveiled on Tree Dressing Day last year.

More recently, artist Jo Chapman spent a year with residents young and old creating their own artworks, poetry, performance and book, at Stockbridge Meadows, a local country park in **Melbourn**. Her work was supported by Camstead Homes and co-ordinated by Melbourn Parish Council, which commissioned the Riverside Arts Project. She also created three permanent structures that are now havens for flora and fauna.

Morris Homes in **Waterbeach** have enabled artist Emma Smith, working with the local cultural collective, to arrange a series of interactive projects with residents about the village (including family days, creative writing groups, maps and music evenings) which she collects for the Living Museum, www.thelivingmuseum.co.uk

Walter Jack has been commissioned by the new Elms Mini/BMW showroom at **Cambourne** to create a kinetic sculpture made from car parts.

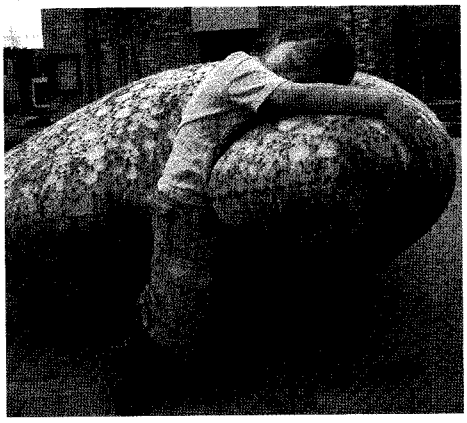
Artist Andrew Tanser is working with Accent Nene and residents of the Swifts development in **Fulbourn** on a number of artworks for the open spaces. They include a stone wave bench, a human sundial and a substantial granite wall showing the history of the village.

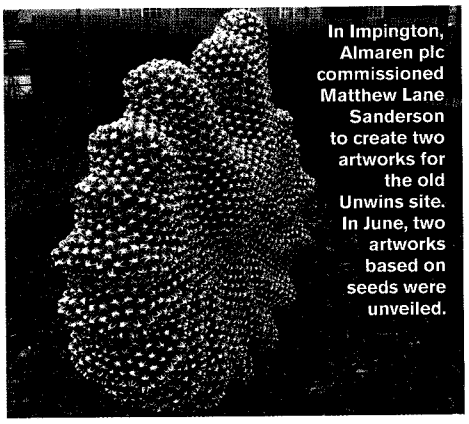


• Travelodge at Orchard Park commissioned Kenny Hunter to create a piece of work for a small open space next to the hotel. Working with Orchard Park Community Council, Kenny has created the poignant figure of a deer in stone, copper and bronze.

In developing Nichols Court at **Linton**, Sanctuary Group commissioned filmmaker Peter Harmer to record the construction and development of the housing scheme for older residents. Hill Residential, in association with the parish councils, is currently commissioning artists in **Great Shelford** and **Landbeach**.

SCDC and Cambridge City Council are working closely on public art programmes in city fringe developments including **Trumpington Meadows** where Grosvenor Estates have commissioned artist Caroline Wright. She has worked previously at **Orchard Park**, supported by Gallagher Estates.





In Impington, Almaren plc commissioned Matthew Lane Sanderson to create two artworks for the old Unwins site. In June, two artworks based on seeds were unveiled.

For more information please see the Public Art Supplementary Planning Document on our website.

StART network

The most recent stART network met in the brand new building at Cottenham Village College. It is equipped with the latest light, sound recording and projection equipment and features Wendy Briggs' hanging glass sculpture. If you are an arts practitioner, a member of a local art/dance/music/drama group and would like to join the network or are simply interested in finding out more please contact Amy Wormald.

Wysing Young Artists

Wysing Arts Centre is an artistic research and development centre offering professional development opportunities for regional artists as well as a gallery where members of the public can meet international artists.

Wysing Young Artists is a programme for talented artists aged 14 – 19; it includes mentoring opportunities as well as three day intensive holiday sessions to introduce young people to contemporary art and develop their portfolios. Deadline for applications is 26 September. For information see www.wysingartscentre.org or contact Kirstin Bicknell.

Get in touch

Contact your arts development manager for more information about local projects or events:

Comberton
Richard Brown
richard@start-arts.org.uk 01223 262503, extension 267
Cottenham and Impington
Amy Wormald
amy@start-arts.org.uk 01954 288748
Melbourn
Kirstin Bicknell
kirstin@start-arts.org.uk 07770 643165
Sawston and Linton
Lesley Morgan lesley@start-arts.org.uk 01223 712825
Swavesey
Karen Thomas karen@start-arts.org.uk 01954 234476

For more information visit: www.start-arts.org.uk

For event listings please visit www.cambridgeshire.net If you don't have an arts development manager in your area please contact Andy O'Hanlon, lead officer for arts and culture on 03450 450500 or arts@scambs.gov.uk

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Q&A – The Housing Revenue Account - changes to housing finances

Remind us what's happening
Last issue we told you that Central Government has changed the way council housing is financed. We used to collect rent from you and pay 50% of it straight to the Treasury to pay for long term central debts arising from the building and maintaining of council housing nationally. From April 2012 we take on our proportion of that debt (around £206m) and keep all our rental income to finance the debt. Although the debt is large, this gives us much more independence over how we manage your homes.

Why is the debt so large?
The Government has used a standard formula to work out the debt level for each Local Authority and has fixed this level of debt for South Cambridgeshire.

Will my rent go up so that you can pay it back quicker?
Your local councillors will consider Government guidelines when setting your annual rent increases.

Will there be cutbacks to our services as a result of the new debt?
The final debt level will be fixed in November 2011, after which we will need to finalise our 30-year business plan and then set yearly budgets going forward. All this is still work in progress.

Will the debt ever get smaller?
In the short term nothing much will change. We plan to negotiate good loan deals, so that over time the proportion of our total rental income used to pay down the debt will fall, or give us scope to invest in housing.

If you reduce the debt over time will you borrow more money to improve services?
We may be in that position in a number of years, but this is entirely dependent upon global, national and local financial situations.

Will my tenancy terms or the security of my home be affected by this debt?
No.

Useful numbers

Unless otherwise stated all calls are charged at local rates

- General enquiries including right to buy and general repairs
  03450 450 051
  8am – 8pm Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays)
  Saturday 8am – 3pm

- Out of office for emergency repairs (after 8pm Friday to 8am Monday)
  03450 450 051

- Community Lifeline Service
  01954 713 470 / 01954 713 468
  Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

- Housing Advice and Homelessness Team
  03450 450 051
  8am – 8pm Monday to Saturday (except Bank Holidays) Office opening times 8.30am-5pm Mon-Thurs, 8.30am-4.30pm Friday

- Rent enquiries and arrears
  03450 450 064
  Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

- Rent Payment by telephone
  03450 455 218
  Automated service 24/7 365 days a year

What tenants and leaseholders share in common

Did you know that there are a number of things that SCDC tenants and leaseholders have in common:

- The same landlord – SCDC
- Provide some of the same services like external maintenance and landscaping
- They can live on the same streets or schemes in the same villages
- They share the sheltered housing officers and housing officers
- Share social events
- Both tenants and leaseholders are active members of TPG

The TPG motto is "Working better together" and this goes for us all – SCDC, tenants and leaseholders.

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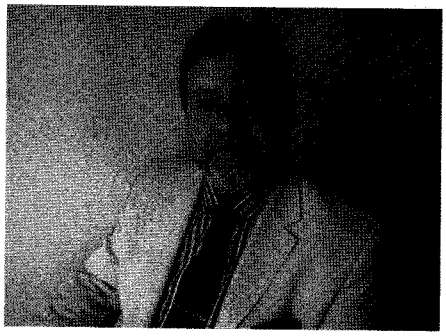

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We are looking for parents and their babies to take part in an ethically approved study of a new programme for bottle-feeding that helps your baby to get the right amount of food for healthy growth.

If you would like to take part in the study, or would like more information, then please contact us on:

0800 756 0878 (freephone)

babymilkstudy@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk
www.mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk/Research/Studies/BabyMilk

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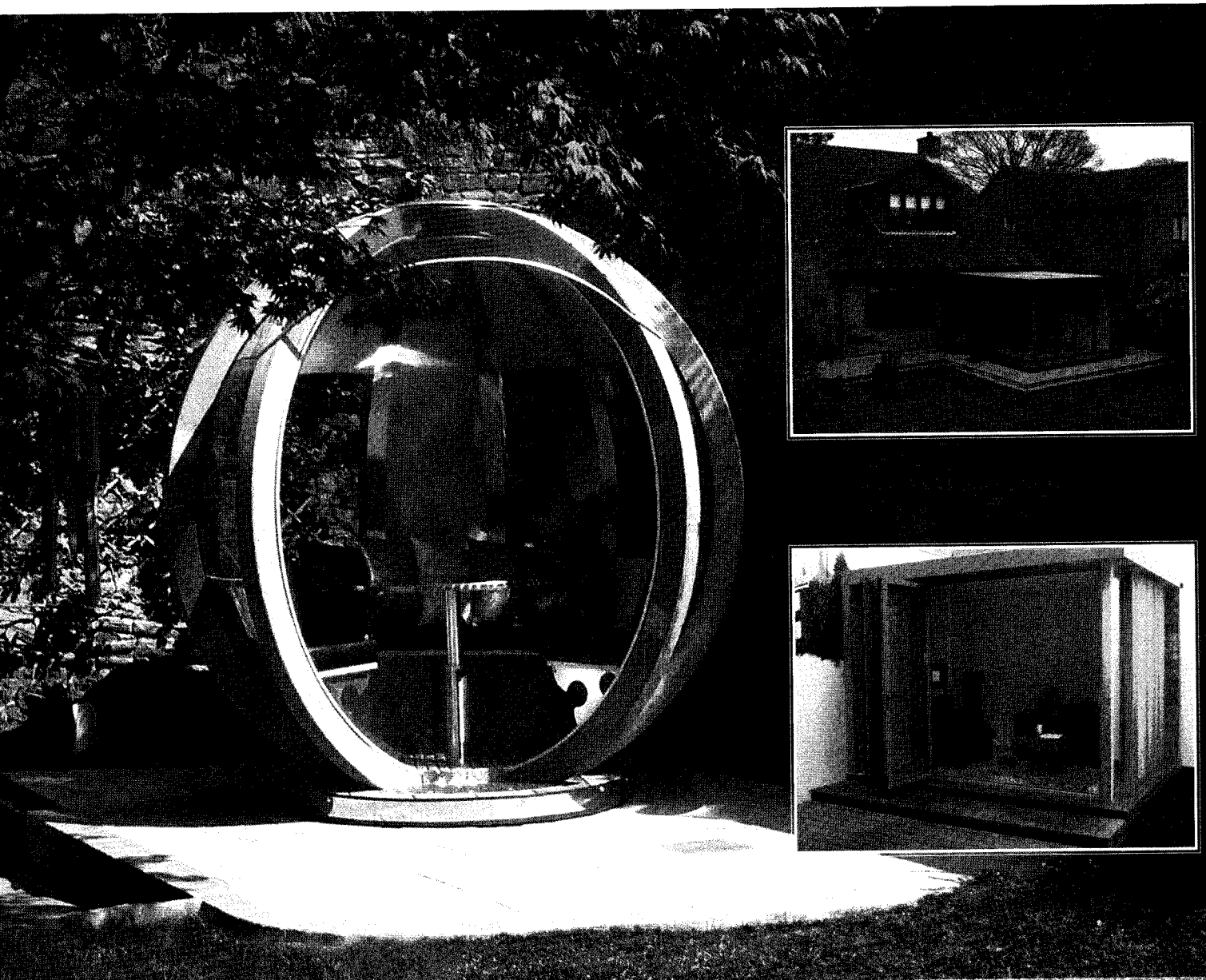

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"Renting" out our roof spaces to benefit tenants and reduce fuel poverty

We're planning on renting the roof space of some of our properties so that solar photovoltaic (pv) panels can be installed. SCDC will benefit from the income and tenants will benefit from reduced electricity bills.

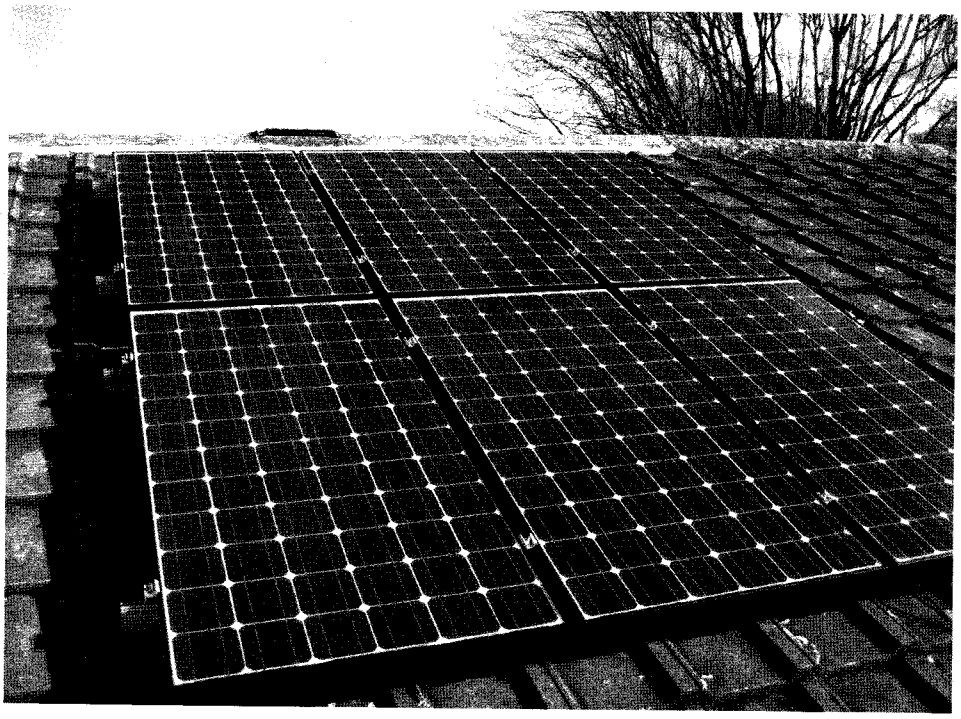
The cells convert sunlight into electricity during the day saving around £100 per year on fuel bills annually over, we hope, 25 years.

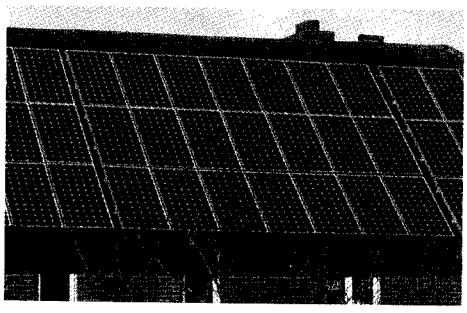
The cost of the pv panels and maintenance costs will be met by the company who are going to be installing them. The company are entitled to recoup the cost from the Governments Feed in Tariff initiative over the next 25 years.

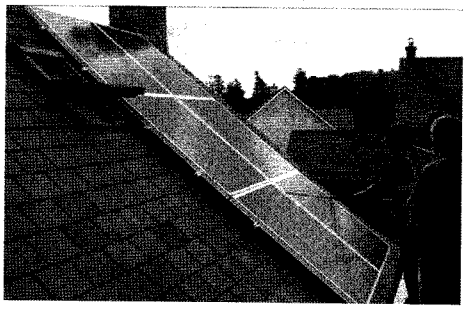
We will invest the income back into your homes to provide better insulation and more affordable heating methods, particularly where there is no mains gas supply.

There will be consultation with you by the company appointed, if you're in the pilot area. All tenants will have the choice of whether to have them installed or not. The numbers installed will greatly depend on the amount of suitable properties and their orientation, as south-facing roofs generate more electricity.

We'll be keeping you updated about this scheme and its progress. We spoke to a number of our tenants about fuel poverty and many of you said this is a problem, this scheme will be a positive step forward to help address this issue.







For further information contact Anita Goddard, 03450 450 051, anita.goddard@scambs.co.uk

Disability forum – getting stuck in

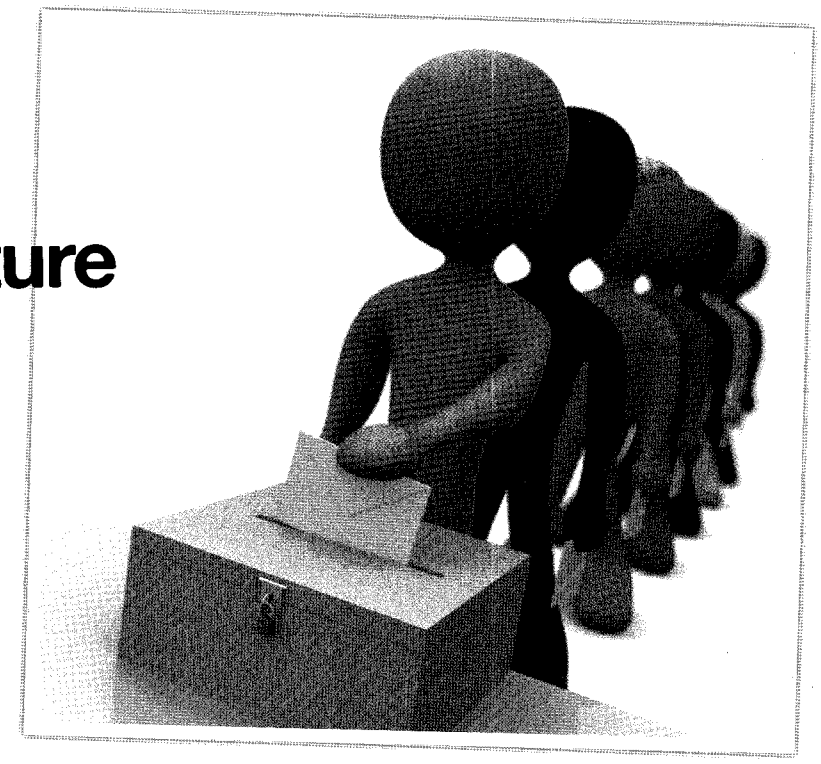
The Disability Forum was set up to improve services after we discovered that 41% of our tenants considered themselves to be disabled (the most recent survey in 2009).

At the July forum a number of actions were agreed for the next year and beyond, including:

- Getting involved in Disability History Month
- Membership of and involvement in SCDC's equalities Consultative Forum to check progress against the equalities action plan
- Working with SCDC to make our documents easier to read.

If you're interested in getting involved please contact the Chair Chris Maitland, 07870 372290, chris.chairSCDCDF@live.co.uk or the Resident Involvement Officer Gill Anderton.

TPG Ballot 2011 - your chance to influence your future



For some time our main tenant body – the Tenant Participation Group (TPG) has been a group of tenants and leaseholders, who give up their time for free and work with us, to help improve the housing services that you all enjoy and rely upon.

Change is coming to housing services led by the Government changes to welfare benefits, funding for new homes, tenancy changes (for new tenancies) and in the Localism Bill changes to planning rules and the involvement of tenants in the governance of their own housing service.

The Tenants Services Authority (TSA) **(The TSA is the Government body set up to look after tenants interests, improve standards and regulate housing providers)** requires us to involve tenants in the running of their service more fully. This is emphasised in the Localism Bill.

New areas for tenant involvement:

- **Scrutiny** – having a close look at the performance of the housing service
- **Value for Money** – weighing up the cost of a product or service against what it does or achieves, based upon both cost and quality
- **Regulatory function** – dealing with rules, rule breaking and rule setting – in this case it is the resolution of tenant complaints.

The ballot will begin in October 2011 and you'll receive your Annual Report for Tenants 2011 and the ballot papers then. The election will be run by the independent Electoral Reform Services and the results will be announced in December 2011.

To enable the TPG to take on this additional responsibility we agree it would be better if members were elected by a ballot of all tenants to create a fully elected mandated body of tenants.

There are 20 places available so put your name forward if you are interested in being on the TPG. Closing date for nominations is Thursday 22 September 2011.

Further details, application forms and election statement forms are available from the Resident Involvement Officer, Gill Anderton, 01954 713377, gill.anderton@scambs.gov.uk

Response repairs contract update

Plans to put in place a new five-year repairs contract (with an option for an additional five years) from next April are going well. In May we had bids in from the shortlisted contractors. The quality and financial elements of each tender have been rigorously tested. Tenants and councillors have both been involved, visiting each company for interviews and to make checks. The council has been supported by a consultancy to make sure it's completely independent and transparent. The decision is now subject to approval and more details will follow in the next issue.

Get in touch

If you're a council tenant or leaseholder and have any suggestions or ideas for your pages please contact Gill Anderton, Resident Involvement Officer, 01954 713377, gill.anderton@scambs.gov.uk

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